The Social and Theoretical Dimensions of Sainthood in Early Islam: Al-Tirmidhī's Gnoseology and the Foundations of Ṣūfī Social Praxis

by

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“Whoever God has beautified with good character God loves and whoever God loves he casts love of that person into the hearts of his servants. God said to Moses upon whom be peace, “I have cast upon you a tender love from me.” So no one would see him (Moses) except that they loved him, even the Pharaoh…”
[al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*]

DEDICATION

In the name of Allāh most Merciful and Compassionate
Praise be to God and may the blessings and peace of God be upon Muḥammad
and his family and companions

For my parents ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm Palmer and Amīna Palmer
who have been my guides and inspiration all my life.

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Contents

List of Appendicies

List of Abbreviations

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* (1992)	*SA*
Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* (ms.)	*KH*
Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* (2010)	*NU*
Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ* (1983)	*IA*
Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition	*EI2*
Encyclopædia Iranica	*EIr*
Bernd Radtke: *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism* (1996)	*CS*
Muḥiyuddīn b. ʿArabī: *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (1966)	*FH*

System of Transliteration for Arabic Letters

ʾ	ء	z	ز	q	ق
b	ب	s	س	k	ك
t	ت	sh	ش	l	ل
th	ث	ṣ	ص	m	م
j	ج	ḍ	ض	n	ن
ḥ	ح	ṭ	ط	h	ه
kh	خ	ẓ	ظ	w	و
d	د	ʿ	ع	y	ي
dh	ذ	gh	غ	in construct state: t	ة
r	ر	f	ف		

The article: al- and l- (even in front of sun letters)

Short vowels		Long vowels		Dipthongs	
u	ـُ	ū	و	aw	ـَو
a	ـَ	ā	ا	ay	ـَي
i	ـِ	ī	ي	iyy	ـِيّ
Nunation				uww	ـُوّ
an	ـً				
in	ـٍ				
un	ـٌ				

Abstract

This study explores al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and gnoseology. This is accomplished through a reading al-Tirmidhī's works in addition to an analysis of his ideas using Foucault's episteme and discourse methodology. This dissertation offers new perspectives on al-Tirmidhī's contribution to the Ṣūfī doctrine of sainthood and to the development of early Islamic mysticism. Included in this study and for the first time in print is al-Tirmidhī's unstudied work, *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*. The first chapter introduces al-Tirmidhī's social and political context and how this context played an important factor in shaping al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood. Al-Tirmidhī is situated in relation to various claims to authority in Islamicate societies at the end of the 9th-century C.E. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood casts the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* as the true representatives of Islamic religious authority, as embodied in the saints who are counted as coming from their ranks. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood also incorporates aspects of various discourse streams within his learned context. The discourse streams addressed in this study are: Hellenism, early Ḥanafī/Murjiʾī theology and Islamic mysticism. Within Hellenism we find that al-Tirmidhī focuses on Pythagorean wisdom as one aspect of his gnoseology which serves to frame the non-dual quality of saintly knowledge. Al-Tirmidhī's Ḥanafī theological background leads him to expand sainthood to all Muslims while restricting it in practice to the scholarly class of the *ʿulamāʾ*. Islamic mysticism is a discourse stream that also informs al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and doctrine of sainthood through al-Muḥāsibī's "asceticism of the soul", an approach adopted by al-Tirmidhī and applied to his process of mystical development. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood played a pivotal role in providing a Khurāsānian structure to Islamic mysticism in the later form that Sufism would take. The seal of sainthood and the idea that there will always be a constant presence of saints in the world are aspects of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood that provide an optimistic alternative to the world outlook of Traditionalists. This outlook appears in later Sufism with the adoption of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood. Ibn ʿArabī further refines and develops al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood in his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, which is structured by al-Tirmidhī's ring analogy. Other mystics such as the eponyms of the Shādhilī *Ṭarīqa* developed al-Tirmidhī's concept of wisdom as a practical tool for the education of aspirants upon the Ṣūfī path. This dissertation presents al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood in light of new methodological approaches and textual research that has important implications for how we understand early Islamic mysticism as well as how we view the role of Sufism in Muslim societies up to this day.

Introduction

The Study of Islamic Sainthood

In the study of Islamic sainthood (*walāya*)[1] there are multiple possible trajectories to embark upon. Much of the current discussion in the field has focused on anthropological, sociological or phenomenological approaches to Islamic sainthood.[2] These studies look at sainthood in its socio-cultural and/or religious context. While these are important contributions to the study of sainthood in Islam, they are clearly influenced by the study of saints and sainthood in Christianity by authors such as Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, Pierre Delooz and Stephen Wilson. This is a trend that I am trying to counterbalance by approaching Islamic sainthood from a more theoretical and theological perspective. The study of Islamic sainthood prior to Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. ʿArabī al-Ḥātimī al-Ṭāʾī (d. 638/1240), also known as Ibn ʿArabī, is underdeveloped as a field,[3] yet this time period sets the stage for later social and political movements within Islam whose effects have been long lasting.

[1] Hereafter, I will use the term *walāya* interchangeably with 'sainthood.'
[2] See Gellner (1984) *Doctor and Saint*, Ewing (1997) *Arguing Sainthood*, Cornell (1998) *Realm of the Saint*, Singh (2003) *Sainthood and Revelatory Discourse*. For a discussion on the interconnectedness of Sufism, sainthood and power in the Deccan and the close relationship between literary production and sainthood see Nile Green (2006) *Indian Sufism since the 17th Century: Saints, Books and Empire in the Muslim Deccan*. Also, Scott Kugle (2006) looks at the motif of the juridical saint in the life and works of Aḥmad Zarrūq (d. 898/1493).
[3] Professor Vincent Cornell encouraged me to focus on sainthood in the East during the early period since this was a crucial point in the development of Islamic sainthood and remains underdeveloped as a topic of study.

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (b. circa 205–215/820–830, d. circa 295–300/907–912)[4] is often credited as the first Muslim to provide a detailed exposition on the topic of *walāya* in Islam.[5] *Walāya* is the Arabic term al-Tirmidhī uses to communicate the idea of a special relationship between God and certain of his elect. Both Gerald Elmore (1999) and Vincent Cornell (1998) agree that the distribution of meanings around the Arabic word *walāya* has few parallels to the term sainthood in English. Despite the seeming incongruity between the two terms most scholars (Michel Chodkiewicz, Carl Ernst, Vincent Cornell, Gerald Elmore, Alexander Knysh, Scott Kugle et al.) consider the use of the terms saint (*walī*)[6] and *walāya* to be acceptable and necessary if we are going to talk about a phenomenon that has both universal and particular characteristics across a wide swathe of cultures and traditions.[7] For the purposes of this study, sainthood and *walāya*, as well as saint and *walī*, will be used interchangeably with the caveat that Islamic sainthood differs qualitatively from other types of sainthood such as Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Buddhist and Confucian sainthood. Elmore, Cornell and Kugle have considerably advanced the field of Islamic sainthood by contextualizing the term *walāya* through its various meanings within the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth as well as through the use of later dictionaries of Ṣūfī terminology. However al-Tirmidhī's own use of the term *walāya*, even based on a cursory reading of his corpus, shows that a new significance was attached to this term by the middle to late 3rd/9th-century. *Walāya* came to accrue a new universe

[4] Hereafter, we will use the shortened versions of his name interchangeably, either al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, or al-Tirmidhī.
[5] Michel Chodkiewicz. *Seal of the saints, prophethood and sainthood in the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabī*. Translated by Liadain Sherrard. The Islamic Texts Society. Cambridge 1993, p. 27. Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz in his *Kitāb al-Ṣidq* and Sahl al-Tustarī in his *Tafsir* both discuss the topic of sainthood but do not provide a unified theory of sainthood. That is not to say that al-Tirmidhī does provide what we would call a unified theory but that his works provide the fullest treatment of the topic in early Islamic mysticism.
[6] Hereinafter I will use the term *walī* for saint.
[7] Scott Kugle. *Rebel between spirit and law: Aḥmad Zarrūq, sainthood and authority in Islam*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2006, pp. 30–32.

of meanings within the linguistic, socio-cultural and religious climate of eastern Khurāsān and Transoxania[8]. This is not to mention the new meanings and significance that al-Tirmidhī also brought to this term as he sought to reclaim *walāya* from those whom he saw as having appropriated it for their own ends.

The terminology we use to discuss and understand sainthood in Islam is still evolving. Vincent Cornell (1998), in his valuable work on Moroccan sainthood, has sought to break with the Neo-Weberian approach to Muslim sainthood that equates *baraka* with charisma and substitutes *marabout* for prophet. According to Cornell, Max Weber's paradigm of charismatic sainthood and its institutionalization through the "routinization of charisma," does not accord with Michael Gilsenan's (1982) anthropological study of Moroccan maraboutism. Cornell claims that his study seeks to understand the underlying epistemological foundations of the Moroccan holy man's charisma. While Cornell does not go so far as Bryan Turner (1998) to say that we cannot use or apply the term "sainthood" to the study of Muslim saints, he does call for a terminological and methodological approach that is wedded more closely to the Islamic literary corpus and self-definition.[9] In this respect he employs the dual terms *wilāya*/*walāya*, through which he seeks to separate two important meanings embedded in the Islamic concept of sainthood, that of power, authority and protection on the one hand, and closeness, intimacy and friendship on the other. Cornell's justification for using the *wilāya*/*walāya* double-term in place of sainthood is that this double meaning has been highlighted by Muslim grammarians and Ṣūfīs over the ages. Cornell explains the ambiguity of the two terms in Arabic and the differences of

[8] In Arabic this geographic area is referred to as *mā warā' al-nahr* (what is beyond the river). This refers to the Amū Darya River, which was a common landmark that separated Iran from Central Asia. I will sometimes refer to Khurāsān and Transoxania together as "Greater Khurāsān" since these two regions often came under the rule of the same governor/*sulṭān*. These regions also share a great deal of cultural and linguistic elements.
[9] Bryan S. Turner. *Weber and Islam*. London: Routledge. 1998, p. 61.

opinion regarding the actual morphological forms that each word represents. Cornell does not claim, however, a historical basis for this approach through an analysis of the way these terms are used in the early sources, or even during the particular period of his study in Moroccan Sufism. Cornell's discussion of the Qurʾānic use of the constellation of related forms to the root *w-l-y* is sparse and he does not address the use of these terms in the Ḥadīth literature or other early genres of Arabic prose and poetry. What seems clear is that Cornell is not so much interested in tracing the historical meanings of these terms as he is in attempting to develop a new methodological approach that stands outside of history. His choice is not arbitrary, but it is also not exactly historical even if it does attempt to more thoroughly understand Muslim sainthood on its own terms. While this approach has benefits, it also serves to unduly narrow our understanding of sainthood to these two facets. For Cornell, the *walī Allāh* is both an intermediary and a patron for his clients. Maria Dakake discusses the use of *walāya* in the context of Shīʿism and argues that *walāya* is more appropriately "charisma" than "sanctity" when communicating Shīʿī notions of authority and identity. This is because, for Shīʿīs, only the Imams have true *walāya* and this authority was removed from temporal existence with the occultation of the Twelfth Imam in the 9th-century C.E. Hence, *walāya*, in the Shīʿī context, is reflected in the representation of the spiritual authority of the Imams through Shīʿī scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*).[10] Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* clearly departs from the Shīʿī approach by presenting *walāya* as ultimately accessible to all Muslims.

[10] Maria Massi Dakake. *The charismatic community Shīʿite identity in early Islam*. Albany: State University of New York Press. 2007, p. 30.

When we look at the historical development of *walāya*[11] during the classical Islamic period there are clear signs of the evolution of this concept, even if many of the basic components of the later doctrines of sainthood still incorporate aspects of earlier forms of *walāya*. In the section on methodology I will explain how, instead of Cornell's use of *wilāya*/*walāya* as a methodological tool, I will use a modified approach to Michel Foucault's notions of episteme and discourse. In my view Foucault's episteme more appropriately addresses the theoretical and epistemological aims of this study, which looks at al-Tirmidhī as one of several early ideologues of what would later become Sufism.

Sainthood in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth Literature

In the Qurʾān, the term *walāya* appears twice. According to Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) the term *walāya* first appears in Qurʾān 18:44[12] and refers to God's authority (*mulk*) and power (*sulṭān*). The second usage in Qurʾān 8:72[13] denotes the meaning of inheritance (*mīrāth*).[14] In this verse those who had migrated to Madīna were not allowed to inherit from believing Muslims who had remained in Makka until those remaining Muslims had also

[11] I will limit myself to just one of the two terms when denoting Islamic sainthood for the sake of simplicity. I believe that focusing on *wilāya*/*walāya* as the basis for a methodological approach actually obscures our understanding of Islamic sainthood during the early Abbasid period in eastern Khurāsān and Transoxania.

[12] Qurʾān 18:44 reads: *hunāk al-walāyatu li-llāh al-ḥaqq huwa khayru thawāban wa-khayru ʿuqbā*, There, protection is completely for Allāh, the Truth, he is best in reward and best in outcome.

[13] Qurʾān 8:72 reads: *Inna al-ladhīna āmanū wa-hājarū wa-jāhadū bi-amwālihim wa anfusihim fī sabīl Allāh wa-alladhīna āwaw wa-naṣarū ulāʾika baʿḍuhum awliyāʾu baʿḍ wa alladhīna āmanū wa lam yuhājirū mā lakum min walāyatihim min shayʾ ḥattā yuhājirū wa-in istanṣarūkum fī al-dīn fa-ʿalaykum al-naṣru illā ʿalā qawm*[in] *baynakum wa-baynahum mīthāq wa-Allāhu bi-mā taʿmalūna baṣīr*, Indeed those who have believed and emigrated and fought with their wealth and lives in the cause of Allāh and those who gave shelter and aided, they are allies of one another. But those who believed and did not emigrate, for you there is no guardianship/inheritance of them until they emigrate. And if they seek help of you for the religion, then you must help, except against a people between yourselves and whom is a treaty. And Allāh is seeing of what you do. Saḥīḥ International: http://quran.com/8.

[14] The meaning of inheritance (*mīrāth*) here for *walāya* is supported by al-Suyūṭī in *Tafṣīr al-Jalālayn*, one of the most widely recognized commentaries on the Qurʾān in the Sunnī world.

completed the migration. Subsequently, when we look at the terms *wilāya* and *walāya* in the Ḥadīth corpus, we also find meanings that are confined to inheritance, political authority and patronage. In addition, in Qurʾān 10:62, a verse that is most often interpreted to indicate a concept of closeness actually means protection and patronage. This is the passage according to Yūsufʿ Alī: "Behold! Verily on the *awliyā* of Allāh, there is no fear, nor shall they grieve."[15] The meaning of *lā khawfun ʿalayhim*, "there is no fear," in the Arabic actually means "others shall not fear for them." But it is significant to note that this particular passage does not connote closeness as the later definitions of *wilāya*/*walāya* indicate in most classical Arabic dictionaries.[16] The concept of God's closeness to the human being is indeed found in the Qurʾān as described in verse 50:16, "And we (God) are closer to him than his carotid artery," yet, this description of closeness (*qurba*) in the Qurʾān is a benefit prescribed to all of mankind. It is not something that is conferred upon a special group of select individuals. Nevertheless, the concept of a typology of believers who do have a special implicit closeness to God does exist throughout the Qurʾān in other contexts. We have *siddīqūn* (truthful ones), *ṣāliḥūn* (righteous) and *shuhadāʾ* (martyrs) to name a few. The idea that there can be a special protection from sin also exists in Qurʾān and is found in Qurʾān 33:33. This is the verse that is most often used by Shīʿīs to support their claim of the special protection from sin for the family of the Prophet Muḥammad. So, while the meanings of the words *walāya* and the *awliyāʾ* can communicate a meaning of closeness, these words are primarily used to indicate protection and patronage in the Qurʾān. What we see in these early sources are motifs and themes that are picked up and reworked in the later tradition after having undergone transformations in meaning. At certain points in the

[15] ʿAbdallāh Yusuf ʿAlī. *The meaning of the holy Qurʾān: text, translation and commentary (in modern English)*. Petaling Jaya: Islamic Book Trust. 2009, p. 243.
[16] Closeness (*qurba*) is only one of a cluster of meanings given in these dictionaries for *wilāya*/*walāya*.

developmental trajectory of Islamic sainthood, a doctrine emerged that combined and integrated some of these various Qurʾānic and Ḥadīth themes. We see this with figures such as Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), a contemporary of al-Tirmidhī who also spoke about Islamic sainthood (*walāya*). Gerhard Böwering characterizes al-Tustarī's thought as an encounter between his mystical matrix of ideas and Qurʾānic keynotes. A similar statement can be made about al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and other mystics who produced their mystical thought through a constant reflection and reading of the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth. This is reflected in the numerous Qurʾānic quotes scattered throughout their works.

The Ḥadīth literature was also significant and essential for al-Tirmidhī as he formulated his views on sainthood. In many ways the Ḥadīth literature is where we find a treatment of *walāya* that accords more succinctly with later interpretations of Islamic sainthood. While the Qurʾān focuses primarily on meanings of power and protection, the Ḥadīth emphasize closeness and friendship. Probably the most important *ḥadīth* in this respect is the *ḥadīth qudsī* (reported as if God is speaking) that reads:

> *man ʿādā lī waliyy*^{an} *fa-qad ādhantuhu bi-l-ḥarb wa-mā taqarraba ilayya ʿabdī bi-shay*$^{'in}$ *aḥabba ilayya mimmā iftaraḍtu ʿalayhi wa-mā yazālu ʿabdī yataqarrabu ilayya bi-l-nawāfil ḥattā uḥibbah fa-idhā aḥbabtuhu kuntu samʿahu alladhī yasmaʿu bihi wa-baṣarahu alladhī yubṣiru bihi wa-yadahu alladhī yabṭishu bihā wa-rijlahu allatī yamshī bihā wa-in saʾalanī la-uʿṭiyannahu wa-la-in istaʿādhanī la-uʿīdhannah*.[17]
>
> Whoever shows enmity to a saint of mine I declare war upon. My slave does not draw nearer to me in anything more beloved to me than what I have made obligatory upon him. My servant then continues to draw nearer to me with supererogatory works until I love him and when I love him I become the hearing with which he hears and the eyesight with which he sees and the hand with which he grasps and the foot with which he walks. If he asks of me I will

[17] Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī. *Al-jāmiʿ al-musnad al-saḥīḥ al-mukhtasar min umūr rasūl Allāh ṣalla Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam wa sunanihi wa ayyāmihi*. Beirut: Dār Ṭūq al-Najāt. 2001, vol. 8, p. 105.

> surely give to him and if he seeks protection in me I will surely protect him.

This *ḥadīth* is considered axial for almost any Islamic mystic who discusses Islamic sainthood. It brings together the important notions of power and protection that we find in the Qurʾān with notions of nearness and the replacement of God's attributes for human attributes in the person of the saint. Al-Tirmidhī, along with most of the other early Islamic mystics, quotes this particular *ḥadīth* in reference to *walāya*.[18] Before al-Tirmidhī, the discourse on *walāya* and the *awliyāʾ* (saints)[19] revolved primarily around distinguishing between the miracles of prophets (*muʿjizāt*) and the miracles of saints (*karāmāt*). This became a point of theological doctrine for most Sunnīs because the Muʿtazilīs[20] denied the miracles of saints. This position caused theological problems because the Qurʾān itself attests to miracles by other than prophets and messengers such as Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is generally not considered a prophet but has several miracles ascribed to her in the Qurʾān.

In the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature *walāya* is not connected to a special type of knowledge (*ʿilm*). Nor is there any particular connection between *walāya* (sainthood) and *khilāfa* (succession) to God or the Prophet. We will explore how al-Tirmidhī introduces new elements like these to the understanding of *walāya* in Chapters 2 and 5. Thus, we can summarize by saying that the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature give us an important background that will help us to

[18] Al-Tirmidhī uses this *ḥadīth* in *NU*. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Nawādir al-uṣūl fī maʿrifat aḥādīth al-Rasūl: al-nuskha al-musnada al-kāmila*. Ed. Tawfīq Muḥammad Taklah. Bayrūt: Dār al-Nawādir. 2010, vol. 6, p. 160.

[19] Hereafter I will use the term *awliyāʾ* as the Arabic plural for 'saints'.

[20] The Muʿtazilīs were a theological movement beginning in the late Umayyad period and early Abbasid period and remaining for a good time after. They favored rationalism in their interpretation of Qurʾānic and Ḥadīth precedents. They fell out of favor after their participation in the Miḥna (Inquisition) (218-234/833-848/49). This group cannot be considered to be a single *madhhab* (school) in the sense of the later Fiqh (jurisprudence) *madhāhib* (schools) but functioned more like a straw man for later theological schools of al-Ashʿarī and al-Māturīdī who often defined themselves in contrast to this early theological movement. "Muʿtazilīs." *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 28 March 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/mu-tazila-COM_0822>

distinguish the important contributions al-Tirmidhī makes to the doctrine of *walāya*. This is because the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth were constant points of reference for early mystics like al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī, who meditated upon their meanings and used the vocabulary of these sources to couch their particular claims. As we will see, the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth were central, but not exclusive, sources used by these mystics.

The Cult of Saints

No discussion of sainthood is complete without addressing the cult of saints. What is conspicuous about al-Tirmidhī's discussion of sainthood is the absence of the phenomenon of the cult of saints in his writings, or at least the absence of any trace that we can identify as indicative of saint veneration in a sociological sense. He does not discuss dead saints, nor does he refer to visiting the tombs or shrines of dead saints. Nevertheless, there is an indirect connection between al-Tirmidhī and the cult of saints in that al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood appears to provide an important theoretical basis for the perpetuation of this social phenomenon as it develops later in the Islamic world. Up to the present, saint veneration mediates certain forms of religious practice among Muslims from the United States to Indonesia and has become one of the main points of cleavage between groups that reject saint veneration as opposed to those who subscribe to its underlying ideology. This cleavage between Salafī[21] groups and Ṣūfī[22] groups, for example,

[21] This is a term adopted by Muslim reformers beginning in the 19th century who sought to free Muslims from the accumulated 'baggage' of tradition by returning to the Qurʾān and Sunna (example of the Prophet). It is best understood as a reaction to the threat of colonization in the Ottoman Empire and was first articulated by a group of Sufis in Damascus who were inspired by the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and other Ṣūfīs who called for an abolition of the legal and theological madhahib under the pretext that these schools of thought sowed partisanship and dissension. For more on the beginnings of Salafism and its relationship to Sufism see: Itzchak Weismann. *The Naqshbandiyya: orthodoxy and activism in a worldwide Sufi tradition*. London: Routledge. 2007.

[22] I will be discussing my interpretation of this term in more detail in Chapter 4, however, in this context I use Ṣūfī to refer to a particular Muslim identity that privileges a set of historically and socially defined authority structures. When a modern Muslim identifies as a Ṣūfī he is not always identifying as a mystic but is acknowledging a set of assumptions about the nature and structure of Islamic authority.

has in some places superseded the traditional Sunnī/Shīʿī cleavage that has historically divided Muslims.[23] The practices that are connected to the cult of saints[24] and saint veneration have deep popular cultural roots within the Near East and beyond. These practices also seek ideological justification and draw inspiration from Ṣūfī theorists such as al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī. The famous Moroccan Ṣūfī and saint, Muḥammad al-Jazūlī (d. 869/1465), became the eponymous founder of the Jazūliyya, a Shādhilī Ṣūfī order that played a significant role in the *jihād* (holy war) against the Portuguese and led to the adoption of Sharīfian rule in Morocco. Al-Jazūlī demonstrates the dynamic potential of the doctrine of the *al-insān al-kāmil* (perfected individual), which was an outgrowth of ideas championed by Ibn ʿArabī and al-Tirmidhī. Another important Ṣūfī leader in the 18th- and 19th-centuries C.E. was Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1230/1815) who became the eponymous founder of a now global Ṣūfī brotherhood. He directly appealed to al-Tirmidhī's idea of the seal of sainthood (*khatm al-walāya*). He claimed the same title of the sealer of saints (*khātim al-awliyāʾ*)[25] that al-Tirmidhī describes in his book, *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ*. ʿUmar al-Fūṭī[26] (d. 1280/1864) of the Tijānī Ṭarīqa in West Africa records the words of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, *Anā sayyid al-awliyāʾ kamā kāna rasūl Allāhi ṣalla Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallama sayyida al-anbiyāʾ*, "I am the master of the saints just as the messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace was master of the prophets."[27] This mirrors the wording of al-Tirmidhī's own writing when he describes the sealer of saints, *Fa-huwa fī kulli makān awwalu*

[23] ʿAbdurraḥmān ʿAbd al-Khāliq in his book *Al-fikr al-Ṣūfī fī ḍawʾ al-kitāb wa al-sunna*, describes Sufism as the worst calamity to have befallen Islam throughout its entire history. One of the major tenets of Sufism that he seeks to discredit is sainthood and its ethos. ʿAbdurraḥmān ʿAbd al-Khāliq. *Al-fikr al-Ṣūfī fī ḍawʾ al-kitāb wa al-sunna*. Damascus: Dār al-Fayḥāʾ. 1993, p. 2.

[24] This is a contested term and does not apply well to Islamic sainthood, however I use it here simply because of its wide usage in the field.

[25] We will discuss the difference between *khātam* (the last) as opposed to *khātim* (the sealer) in our discussion of al-Tirmidhī's use of this term in his doctrine of *walāya* in Chapter 5.

[26] ʿUmar al-Fūṭi was a student of Muḥammad al-Ghālī bū Ṭālib who was a student of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. ʿUmar al-Fūṭi spread the Tijānī Ṭarīqa in West Africa.

[27] ʿUmar b. Saʿīd al-Fūṭī. *Rimāḥ ḥarb al-Raḥīm ʿalā naḥwu ḥarb al-rajīm*. Egypt, 1901, p. 260.

al-awliyāʾ kamā kāna Muḥammad ṣalla Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama awwalu al-anbiyāʾ, "He is, in every way the foremost of the saints just as Muḥammad may God bless him and grant him peace was the foremost of the prophets."[28] The clear parallels between the thought of Aḥmad al-Tijānī and al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī beg us to consider the archeology of sainthood within Islam and its ideological force as an instrument of authority. The cosmological significance that al-Tirmidhī gives to the living saints carries over in the later tradition to the eponyms of the various *ṭarīqas* (Ṣūfī brotherhoods) like Aḥmad al-Tijānī whose tombs became important sites of visitation and veneration.

Al-Tirmidhī is the first Muslim mystic to describe a mystical geography that connects the unseen realm (*ghayb*) with the seen world that intersects at the heart of the mystic. In this mystical geography light from the unseen realm flows into the seen world through the heart of the mystic and is a means of maintaining the existence of the world. When a mystic dies, that mystical geography overlays the physical geography of the earth at the place where the saint is buried. Hence, Ṣūfīs will visit the graves of saints because these places are considered to be windows into the unseen realm and places where God's theophany is strongest. I will discuss more about the heart of the mystic as a site of divine theophany in Chapters 5 and 6.

The model of sainthood that al-Tirmidhī develops presents important questions for the study of sainthood outside of Islam as well. When addressing the Jewish Polish Hasidic movement of the 18th-century C.E., Gershom Scholem[29] traces the motif of the *tsaddik* (in Arabic *ṣiddīq*) from the time of Rabbi Abbahu, a 4th-century C.E. *amora* (rabbinic scholar), up to the modern Polish Hasidic movement. Multiple traditions that abound within the biblical and

[28] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt li-l-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: Kitāb Sirāt al-awlīyāʾ, Jawāb al-masāʾil allatī saʾalahu ahl Sarakhs ʿanhā, Jawāb Kitāb min al-rayy.* Ed. Radtke, B. Arabisch-Deutsche Ausg. Bayrūt: Yuṭlabu min Dār al-Nashr Frānts Shtāynar, Shtūtgārt. 1992, p. 45.
[29] Gershom Scholem. *Major trends in Jewish mysticism*. New York: Schocken Books. 1971.

talmudic literature depict pious and just men who supported the existence of the world. However, in the late 3rd-century and early 4th-century C.E., the number seems to have become fixed at thirty-six and the idea emerged that these hidden just men also have a special relationship to the divine countenance. Scholem's question, however, is whether or not the motif of the thirty-six *tsaddikim* (*Lamed-vav* in Hebrew) is part of a continuous tradition from Late Antiquity or whether the motif entered Islamic sources and then filtered back into Judaism. A similar *ḥadīth* text describes forty *ṣiddīqīn* from the Syria-Levant region for whom humanity is saved. This and other similar traditions in the Ḥadīth literature form a central component of al-Tirmidhī's discourse on sainthood. While the Ḥadīth literature concerning the *ṣiddīqīn* does not seem to make a specific connection between the *ṣiddīq* and a special mystical state based on knowledge of God, al-Tirmidhī does make this connection. Hence, sainthood is a topic that has the potential to cross religious and inter-religious factional lines. This is why al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood is important, not simply for its historical significance, but for its potential as a religious and social force.

Sainthood and Authority in the Age of Sanctification

Some of the impetus for looking anew at al-Tirmidhī's thought comes from recent scholarship on sainthood from the period of approximately the 13th-century C.E. to the beginning of the 19th-century C.E. Some have dubbed this the "Age of Sanctification," in which the Muslim saint or holy man (*walī*) was an important contender for power and authority in Islamicate societies. Dina de Gall calls this period the "triumph of sainthood" and the rise of the Ṣūfī brotherhoods.[30] Tanvir Anjum discusses the important role that Ṣūfīs played in the negotiation of

[30] Dina Le Gall. "Recent thinking on Sufis and saints in the lives of Muslim societies, past and present." *International Journal of Middle East Studies.* 42 (04). 2010, p. 685.

power between the Abbasid Caliph and the Seljukid sultans as well as their role in giving legitimacy to the Mamluks in Egypt.[31] Margaret Malamud shows how the Seljuk sultans in Khurāsān actively supported Sufi *khānaqās* (Ṣūfī lodges) during the 11th-century C.E.[32] Erik Ohlander documents the close relationship between Ṣūfī *shaykhs* and the Abbasid Caliphs[33] in the 12th- and 13th-centuries C.E. in an important era of transition when Ṣūfī brotherhoods were gaining global, economic, political and religious power. Blain Auer demonstrates the intriguing relationship between the development of two prominent Ṣūfī brotherhoods in Northern India and the Sultanate of Delhi.[34] While there is still a need for further research in the relationship between Ṣūfīs and political power in Islamicate societies, current research in this field has demonstrated a complex and interwoven relationship between Ṣūfī *shaykhs*, court culture and political elites. This inevitably leads us to question whether or not there was a prior theoretical basis informing this type of relationship or whether it simply grew organically out of the social and religious institutions of the 12th- and 13th-centuries C.E. It is unlikely that a figure like Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234) would have been endowed with such authority as was given him by the Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh unless that authority was somehow supported by some type of prior justification. A Ṣūfī identity was not enough to be a rationale for power and authority. A rationale was needed to convince non-Ṣūfīs of the right of Ṣūfīs to religious authority. Genealogy was certainly part of this construction of authority and al-Suhrawardī, like other Ṣūfīs of his period, used genealogy to support their claims. However,

[31] Tanvir Anjum. "Sufism in History and its Relationship with Power". *Islamic Studies.* 45 (2). 2006, pp. 260-262.
[32] Margaret Malamud. "Sufi Organizations and Structures of Authority in Medieval Nīshāpūr". *International Journal of Middle East Studies.* 26 (03). 1994, p. 436.
[33] Erik S. Ohlander. *Sufism in an age of transition ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī and the rise of the Islamic mystical brotherhoods*. Leiden: Brill. 2008, pp. 89-112.
[34] Auer Blain. "Intersections between Sufism and power, narrating the shaykhs and sultans of Northern India, 1200-1400" in *Sufism and Society Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200-1800*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis. 2011, pp. 17-33.

genealogy is, in a sense, the last piece in the puzzle that represents the development of Ṣūfī religious authority. While claims to Islamic religious authority are often grounded in religious texts like the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth, the structure of these claims is also intimately tied to norms and social conventions that return to the social and political patterns that existed at the time of the early Arab conquests. This is also true for some of the historical and political precedents that established Arab and Islamic rule in those regions that came under the suzerainty of the Umayyad (41-132/661-750) and Abbasid (132-656/750-1258) dynasties. As I will attempt to demonstrate in Chapter 1, al-Tirmidhī establishes the underlying theoretical framework for Ṣūfī authority patterned after the social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*). This was an institution that mediated social relationships of dependence between Arab rulers and non-Arab subjects up into the early Abbasid period, especially in the province of Greater Khurāsān. While genealogy was an important component of Arab claims to superiority over non-Arab subjects, it was not a significant element of al-Tirmidhī's concept of authority. Rather, for al-Tirmidhī, the slave-freeman dichotomy, as preserved in the social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*), served as the basis for rationalizing implicit assumptions about the right to power and authority. Al-Tirmidhī transferred these structural dichotomies over to the *ʿāmma*/*awliyāʾ* (common Muslims/saints). It was later Ṣūfī advocates within Islam such as Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) and Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1074) who added the element of genealogy to reinforce other notions of mystical authority first introduced by al-Tirmidhī. The articulation of Ṣūfī authority took its complete form under al-Qushayrī and I will argue based on the work of Francesco Chiabotti that his articulation of Sufism represents a mystical synthesis that inaugurates Sufism as we know it today as a meta-identity with Islam. By understanding al-Sulamī's and al-

Qushayrī's use of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* we can better understand how this synthesis takes place.

Methodology

My methodological approach draws heavily from Foucault's concepts of episteme and discourse. Foucault defines the episteme in *Power/Knowledge*:

> I would define the episteme retrospectively as the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable within, I won't say a scientific theory, but a field of scientificity, and which it is possible to say are true or false. The episteme is the 'apparatus' which makes possible the separation, not of the true from the false, but of what may from what may not be characterized as scientific.[35]

Al-Tirmidhī's attempt to establish Islamic mysticism within the discourse of Islamic sciences makes Foucault's episteme useful in explaining how Islamic mysticism became a part of the discursive formations that characterized the uses of knowledge and power in the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). Despite our reliance on Foucault's approach to the episteme, we have found it necessary to modify his approach in order to adapt it to al-Tirmidhī's time period and context. Foucault provides a useful framework for understanding knowledge systems and the development of the sciences in particular. Despite the fact that he is primarily concerned with the development of sciences in the European context during the 17th- and 18th-centuries C.E., his idea of the episteme can help us to understand the development of the Islamic sciences in the 9th-century C.E. Franz Rosenthal dubs the 9th-century in the Islamic world as, "…the age of science, the age in which systematic knowledge in a wide variety of clearly defined fields became the

[35] Michel Foucault. *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. Edited and Translated by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books. 1980, p. 197.

dominant form of expression for Muslim intellectual aspirations."[36] Rosenthal argues that the the Ṣūfīs tried strenuously to present their knowledge (*ʿilm*) as a 'science' in order to keep up with the views of knowledge that were current at that time.[37] Al-Tirmidhī was certainly one of those advocating that Islamic mysticism[38] should be given a position of authority in relation to other Islamic disciplines.[39] Foucault's episteme proves helpful when we think about the type of intellectual history that we are dealing with in the thought of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, since we are dealing with a profound and detailed exposition on knowledge and its place in the Islamic tradition. Thus, we are not dealing with the type of questions that have been proposed in prior expositions of al-Tirmidhī's thought, such as: Was al-Tirmidhī a conduit for Greek ideas that flowed into Sufism? This type of a question is problematic on many fronts since it essentializes both 'Greek' knowledge and 'Sufism'. Such a question further limits our process of inquiry, since, were we to find elements of Greek knowledge in the thought of al-Tirmidhī, we might be content to have answered our question and stopped there. Foucault's episteme helps us to move beyond the straight-jacket of these essentialisms and to cast a wider net that can open new possibilities. The episteme represents a set of assumptions about the categories of knowledge that were shared by al-Tirmidhī's milieu. In order to understand al-Tirmidhī, we need to understand how he engaged in the discourse of this milieu. This means we have to understand the social and epistemological backgrounds of al-Tirmidhī's contemporaries in order to compare with his own thought. In this way we can better appreciate al-Tirmidhī's contribution to concepts of *walāya*

[36] Franz Rosenthal,. *Knowledge triumphant the concept of knowledge in medieval Islam*. Boston: Brill. 2007, p. 176.
[37] Ibid, p. 177.
[38] I don't use the term Sufism here because Radtke and others have argued that al-Tirmidhī was not a Ṣūfī but represented a different form of Islamic mystical doctrine. I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter 4 where, in essence, I agree with this formulation, however, I would add that, in a similar way, we should not consider Abū al-Qāsim al-Junayd (d. 297/910), the spokesman of Baghdād mysticism in the 9th century C.E. to have been a Ṣūfī either if we apply the same criteria and look at his own writings rather than the way he is portrayed in the writings of later Ṣūfīs.
[39] Or we could say to supersede those disciplines.

and to Islamic modes of knowledge and authority. Previous studies of al-Tirmidhī have not adequately taken into account the social and epistemological background that characterizes the various discourses in which al-Tirmidhī participated.

In *Les Mots et le Choses* (*The Order of Things*) Foucault chooses four basic knowledge categories in each age to demonstrate how basic assumptions about knowledge can shift when society enters a new episteme. Foucault characterizes the Renaissance as the "Age of Resemblance" and he divides this era into four principal forms of knowledge categories, they are: convenience, emulation, analogy and sympathy.[40] These epistemic structural categories attempt to give a global picture of the coherence of knowledge in the Renaissance. Historians of the Renaissance have given short shrift to Foucault's conclusions about this period and he accepts that critique himself.[41] The benefit of Foucault's discussion in *The Order of Things* is not necessarily centered around the historical conclusions he makes, but rather in the potential benefits of adopting an alternative global perspective based on Structuralism that isolates knowledge categories as a basis for our understanding of the shifts in discourse that have taken place between different historiographical periods. We are not attempting to define global shifts in thought during the Islamic period but rather are attempting to use the episteme to highlight and situate the relevance of al-Tirmidhī's thought. Certainly, the four categories identified in the Renaissance episteme seem arbitrary to a certain degree, but they alert us to the global distinctions between categories of knowledge that are useful for navigating the streams of discourse. If we were to ask ourselves whether such a thing as an episteme exists, I think we can agree that at some level this is an intuitive reality. This is because all discourse aims at imparting

[40] Gary Gutting,. *Michel Foucault's archaeology of scientific reason*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. 1989, p. 140.
[41] Ian Maclean,. Foucault's Renaissance Episteme Reassessed: An Aristotelian Counterblast. *Journal of the history of ideas*. Vol. 59 (1), January 1998.

some knowledge to others within the universe of discourse. That can only be done if some of the knowledge categories that are shared are so basic that everyone within the episteme agrees upon them without question. We are all constrained to some degree by basic assumptions about the nature of knowledge that we inherit from our religious, social and cultural milieus. The benefit of Foucault's method is to help us escape a linear historical framework that does injustice to the complex network of ideas and concepts that emerge in the discourse between authors within a given scholarly community and period in history. While the form and expression of a particular concept can resemble borrowings from other cultures and traditions, when we look closely, those same terms often take on different significations when they relate to the author's usage within his discourse based on the similarities and differences with other authors with whom he was in dialog at the time. This idea is not new to Foucault. Al-Tirmidhī comments on this phenomenon when he explains how the term Fiqh (jurisprudence), for example, meant something very different in an earlier Islamic milieu. Al-Tirmidhī tries repeatedly to return back to the original significations of Qurʾānic terminology. This is one aspect of how al-Tirmidhī saw himself as a reformer, an idea I will expand upon later.

In order to establish my methodology on firmer historical grounds than Foucault, I will also draw upon established scholarship on knowledge (ʿ*ilm*) and its various types in Islamicate societies. Fortunately, Franz Rosenthal provides us with a thorough and well documented study on knowledge in Islamic disciplines. Rosenthal discusses six types of knowledge that appear in the first four centuries of Islamic civilization. These are: knowledge as revelation (*waḥy*), knowledge as Ḥadīth, knowledge as theology (*Kalām*), knowledge as light (*nūr*), knowledge as

thought (*tafakkur*) and knowledge as *adab* (education - *paideia*).[42] All of these approaches to knowledge existed in Muslim societies by the middle of the 9th-century C.E. when al-Tirmidhī was writing his works. I believe that al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology must be understood in relation to these main types of knowledge, since, in effect, they represent the basic contours of his episteme. Foucault's methodological perspective helps us to explain why it is important that al-Tirmidhī focuses on *ḥikma* (wisdom), since this knowledge type was virtually ignored by the early tradition and represented a gap that could be filled by al-Tirmidhī. Al-Tirmidhī's discussion of wisdom (*ḥikma*) and how it factors into his doctrine of *walāya* will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

The 9th- and 10th-centuries C.E. witnessed the development of a plethora of religious factions and schools within Islamdom, from the schools of law (*madhāhib*) to various theological schools, to Shīʿī groups of various types.[43] These schools and factions represent discourses that coalesced into corporate identities as these groups developed bodies of literature to represent their particular viewpoints and interests. I prefer to use the term 'discourse stream' rather than *madhhab* (school) to capture the more or less fluid network of social relationships and connections among Muslim scholars during the period just prior to and consonant with the formation of the schools of law. For example, we can call al-Tirmidhī a 'Ḥanafī' in the sense that he partakes in a discourse stream that involves a culture of law and theology intimately tied to

[42] One should note how Rosenthal excludes *ḥikma* (wisdom) as a primary knowledge type because he effectively states that in the Islamic tradition knowledge (*ʿilm*) and wisdom (*ḥikma*) were synonymous. *Ibid. Knowledge triumphant*, p. 38.

[43] Christopher Melchert,. *The formation of the Sunni schools of law, 9th-10th centuries C.E*. Leiden: Brill. 1997, pp. xxvi. Melchert argues that the first school of law to develop was the Shafiʿī School in Baghdād at the end of the 9th century. The other schools developed later in the 10th century C.E. Melchert's thesis returns primarily to his definition of *madhhab*, which he views as a corporate entity comprised of a *raʾīs* or chief scholar in a particular location, the existence of commentaries on standard legal epitomes and the regular transmission of legal knowledge in which a student is recognized to have studied under a prominent jurist of that school. Devin J. Steward. Review of *The formation of the Sunni schools of law, 9th-10th centuries* by Christopher Melchert. *Islamic Law and Society*. Vol. 6 (2). 1999, p. 276.

the network of scholars in Khurāsān and Transoxania who identified with Abū Ḥanīfa Nuʿmān b. Thābit (d. 150/772) and his legacy. On the other hand we can clearly say that al-Tirmidhī did not belong to a corporate entity similar to what would become the Ḥanafī *madhhab* (school of law). He had no problem criticizing some of the basic premises of Ḥanafī doctrine and felt free to offer his own alternative legal and theological methodologies. Furthermore, al-Tirmidhī conceives of the transmission of knowledge through the analogy of water flowing in a river and a stream. So, not only does 'discourse stream' capture the fluid network of connections among scholars prior to the *madhhab* (school), but it also captures a sense of how al-Tirmidhī conceived of this process. We will explain al-Tirmidhī's relationship to the Ḥanafī 'School' in more detail in Chapter 3. We cannot say that there is any direct relationship between what we term a 'discourse stream' and what we discussed earlier about Rosenthal's knowledge-types during this period. However, we do posit that every discourse stream must have an epistemological basis so, for our purposes here, we will use Foucault's episteme to understand the underlying structure of knowledge production in al-Tirmidhī's milieu through the eyes of Rosenthal's knowledge types. At the same time, however, we will be addressing the social and historical representations that manifest particular approaches to knowledge within various discourse streams. This two pronged approach will help us better understand how al-Tirmidhī uses his gnoseology to redefine sainthood (*walāya*).

Sources

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī is considered one of the most prolific authors to hail from Khurāsān up through the early 10th-century C.E. Fuat Sezgin numbers his extant works, both

published and in manuscript, at eighty.[44] These works range from full length treatises of several hundred pages to short topical pieces that number only a few pages. While al-Tirmidhī's works touch upon a wide range of fields from Ḥadīth and Qurʾānic commentary to jurisprudence and mysticism, his works also display a high degree of repetition in terms of themes and topical layout. This creates several challenges when attempting to categorize these works. The first is that al-Tirmidhī's use of a particular genre does not conform to the typical conventions of the genres of his period. Al-Tirmidhī seems to bend the genre to accommodate his own purposes and then uses it as a vehicle to expound his ideas. For example, *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* is al-Tirmidhī's commentary on close to three hundred *aḥadīth* (prophetic traditions, pl. of *ḥadīth*) where he provides his unique explanation of each *ḥadīth* from an esoteric perspective, i.e., *ab intra*. This commentary provides a point of departure for al-Tirmidhī to expound upon a variety of topics that are important to his schematization of the world from sainthood to theology. Another problem we face in this regard is that al-Tirmidhī clearly did not conceive of the conventional genres of traditional Islamic disciplines in the same forms that we have received them today. For example, jurisprudence (Fiqh) meant something very different to al-Tirmidhī than it came to be understood within the classical Islamic tradition. This makes it highly problematic to use modern schemas to categorize his works. Al-Tirmidhī lived in a period of intellectual flux in the Muslim world, in which many conceptual categories had not yet become reified. One of the few scholars to present a schematization of the works of al-Tirmidhī is Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Juyūshī who divides al-Tirmidhī's works into seven general groups: Qurʾānic Exegesis (*tafsīr*), prophetic reports (Ḥadīth), theology (Kalām), jurisprudence (Fiqh), legal philosophy (*falsafat al-tashrīʿ*),

[44] Fuat Sezgin,. *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1967, vol. 1, pp. 653–659.

Ṣūfī history (*tārīkh al-ṣūfiyya*) and Ṣūfī ideology (*ārāʾ al-ṣūfiyya*).[45] Both of the titles chosen for these categories, as well as their division, seem to obscure rather than shed light on the contours of al-Tirmidhī's corpus. The use of the term "Ṣūfī" itself is somewhat of an anachronism given that al-Tirmidhī never used the term. Prominent scholars of al-Tirmidhī such as Bernd Radtke do not consider his thought to be characterized as Ṣūfī, but rather as the product of a separate ascetic-mystical movement.[46] One of the reasons that al-Tirmidhī's works are so difficult to organize around particular genres is that al-Tirmidhī was often attempting to redefine or recast received terminology as well as challenge the boundaries of the conceptual landscape developed by his predecessors. Al-Tirmidhī's works cut across received genres and amalgamate topics and themes in unique ways. This means that any one particular text will probably fit into multiple categories. Further complicating our understanding of al-Tirmidhī's corpus is the oral nature of the composition of certain texts. Some of al-Tirmidhī's works resemble notes of a student copying the questions and answers from a teacher who is speaking extemporaneously. *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* is a case in point in this regard and is one possible reason for the repetition of themes within the text. We should note that the oral composition of early texts of this period under discussion often defies modern notions of authorship. This needs to be a factor not only in our understanding of material within the texts, but also the way the text itself plays a role in communicating to us the social and corporate nature of authorship. I will not be specifically addressing the orality of al-Tirmidhī's works in this dissertation. However, I realize that as a student of this early period of Islamic intellectual history, I must be aware that oral modes of

[45] Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Juyūshī. *al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī: dirāsa li-āthārihi wa-afkārih*. al-Qāhira: Dār al-Nahḍa al-ʿArabiyya. 1980, p. 68.

[46] Scholars of Islamic mysticism see al-Tirmidhī as belonging to an indigenous ascetic/mystical movement from greater Khurāsān that was originally transplanted by ʿIrāqī Sufism. See Alexander Knysh's discussion of eastern Islamic mystical movements in *Islamic Mysticism, a Short History*, pp. 88-99.

knowledge transmission affected conceptions of knowledge that were more human-centric than text-centric. This social underpinning to knowledge transmission is the premise upon which I base the concept of the discourse stream, since knowledge was socially transmitted and socially constructed within networks and discourses that include seekers of knowledge (*ṭullāb al-ʿilm*) as well as bona fide scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*).[47]

Al-Tirmidhī's more substantial works number about fifty depending on the size one chooses as a point of demarcation. These works are in both published and manuscript form. About half of his works are published, while the other half remain unpublished as manuscripts scattered in libraries throughout the world. I have attempted my own classification of these works according to the manner in which they relate to important themes in al-Tirmidhī's thought. The point of this classification is to provide a sense for the breadth and depth of al-Tirmidhī's works. My classification scheme is as follows:

1. Sainthood (*walāya*)
2. Disciplining the Lower Self
3. Esoteric Vocabulary
4. Esoteric Interpretation
5. Polemical Works
6. Knowledge and Men of Learning
7. Moral and Ethical Teachings
8. Correspondence
9. Autobiography

[47] I will use the term 'scholarly class' interchangeably with the Arabic term *ʿulamāʾ* from here onwards.

Sainthood

Al-Tirmidhī is probably best known for his works on sainthood and many consider him the first Sunnī Muslim outside of the Shīʿī tradition to address the nature of sainthood and its function in Muslim beliefs about God and the world. For al-Tirmidhī, the saint is the nexus of *al-ẓāhir* (the outward) and *al-bāṭin* (the inward). The *bāṭin*, for al-Tirmidhī includes what is termed the unseen world (*al-ghayb*). Al-Tirmidhī sets the stage for Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111) in his attempt to redefine true knowledge as *maʿrifa* or the knowledge that comes to the saint (*walī*) from the realm of the *bāṭin*. The true *walī* is not dependent upon exoteric knowledge (*al-ʿilm al-ẓāhir*), but through direct inspiration becomes the personification of proof, or *ḥujja*, of God on earth. This approach is reminiscent of what has commonly come to be understood as a primarily Shīʿī epistemology, or we could say, gnoseology. The difference between al-Tirmidhī's understanding of sainthood (*walāya*) and Shīʿī *walāya* will be explicated in more detail in Chapter 5. Al-Tirmidhī's structure of *walāya* is a tri-partite one with the highest of the *awliyāʾ* (saints) being the *kubarāʾ* (the great ones) or *siddīqūn* (the truthful ones). His hierarchy is a nested one in which the *awliyāʾ* sit within the larger category of *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) and both of those within the still larger category of *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars). Al-Tirmidhī's works on *walāya* here represent works that deal with this highest level of the *awliyāʾ*, i.e., the *kubarāʾ* (the great ones).

The two most studied works of al-Tirmidhī in this area of *walāya* (sainthood) are *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* (also known as *Khatm al-Awliyāʾ*) and *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ*, however, there are other important works such as *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* and *Maʿrifat al-Asrār* that also deal with topics related to sainthood. These last two texts have not been studied extensively enough to be used as a major contribution to our understanding of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and his gnoseology. In this dissertation I will be focusing in particular on *NU* to provide clarification on several aspects

of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and gnoseology that are not apparent in his more studied works such as *SA*.

Disciplining the Lower Self

Al-Tirmidhī has numerous works that touch upon the subject of disciplining and refining the soul/lower self (*nafs*). These works, such as *Riyāḍat al-Nafs* and *Adab al-Nafs*, set out to identify the various components of the spiritual body and connect them to corresponding aspects of the physical body. By developing a spiritual topography that is mapped onto the physical body, al-Tirmidhī provides his reader with a heuristic for personal self-purification. Al-Tirmidhī directs the reader to the subtle, almost ineffable spiritual organs that function together to either give free rein to carnal desire (*shahawāt*) or to unfetter the soul so that it can experience freedom in beholding God.

Esoteric Vocabulary

A favorite topic of al-Tirmidhī is the sources and meanings of words and the way they are used in a particular text (such as the Qurʾān). Al-Tirmidhī was also fascinated by mystical vocabulary and was committed to being true to the original meanings of words. Al-Tirmidhī is very clear about his approach to semantics and posits and adheres faithfully to the idea that every word indicates a unique reality. Hence, if the word for soul/lower self (*nafs*) is used in the Qurʾān as a particular term, then according to al-Tirmidhī, it cannot refer to the same thing as the spirit (*rūḥ*). In other words, these must be distinct entities and cannot represent different aspects of a single entity. We also see that some of al-Tirmidhī's works are simply lists of terms that focus on the various meanings of these terms. Some examples of this are *Taḥṣīl Naẓāʾir al-*

Qurʾān, which seeks to clarify the meanings of some eighty Qurʾānic terms, and *Maʿrifat al-Asrār,* which seeks to clarify terminology related to traveling the spiritual path (*sulūk*). Other works are more theoretical in this regard such as *Kitāb al-Furūq wa Manʿ al-Tarāduf* and *Ghawr al-Umūr,*[48] which primarily argue against the existence of synonyms. Still another group of works in this category is dedicated to restoring the true meaning of words that have changed in usage over time. One such work of this kind is *Bayān al-ʿIlm*.

Esoteric Interpretation

A large number of lesser works attributed to al-Tirmidhī provide esoteric interpretations of the meanings behind various acts of worship, specifically focusing on the main pillars of Islam (testification of faith, prayer, fasting and pilgrimage) while also including related acts of worship that might come under these five. Some of his works that are representative of this group are *ʿIlal al-Sharīʿa, Sabab al-Takbīr li-l-Ṣalā* and *Sharḥ al-Ṣalā wa-Maqāṣiduhā*. Here, al-Tirmidhī demonstrates his notion of *ḥikma* by providing what he considers to be the esoteric meaning behind outward acts of worship. In recognition of this status as a sage (*ḥakīm*) and as one of the saints (*awliyāʾ*), al-Tirmidhī claimed to have had access to knowledge of the inner realities (*ḥaqāʾiq*) of things that were revealed to him from God himself. However, probably the most important work in this category is *Kitāb al-Ḥikma,* which discusses the knowledge of the second level of al-Tirmidhī's tripartite structure of *walāya*. This is the level of the sages (*ḥukamāʾ*). To date, no one has published an edition of *KH* and the one extant witness to this text has gone unstudied. *KH* is crucial, however, to understanding al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and

[48] Bernd Radtke does not consider this work to be original to al-Tirmidhī, however, many of the ideas in the work bear the stamp of al-Tirmidhī. We should be willing to consider the proposition that this work may have been the work of one of al-Tirmidhī's students even if it was not his own work.

gnoseology because it is the fullest explication of al-Tirmidhī's concept of wisdom (*ḥikma*) among al-Tirmidhī's many works. In Appendix B we provide a transcription of *KH* with notes demonstrating its connection to other works in al-Tirmidhī's corpus.

Polemical Works

As a scholar in the Ḥanafī theological tradition, al-Tirmidhī wrote works against movements that he saw as heretical. Two works in this regard are *al-Radd ʿalā al-Rāfiḍa* and *al-Radd ʿalā al-Muʿaṭṭila,* both of which argue against the positions of the proto-Shīʿīs and the Muʿtazilīs. Other works relating to theology that demonstrate ideas in accord with early Ḥanafī theology are *Sharḥ Qawlihi mā al-Īmān wa-mā al-Islām wa mā al-Iḥsān* and *al-Kalām ʿalā Maʿnā Lā Ilāha illā Allāh*. Another work that was polemical in al-Tirmidhī's time was *Bayān al-Kasb,* which clarifies the importance and legality of earning a livelihood. This work was most probably oriented toward refuting the Karrāmiyya who were active during al-Tirmidhī's time, especially in eastern Khurāsān.

Knowledge and Men of Learning

The nature and character of knowledge was of critical importance to al-Tirmidhī's conceptual system. Al-Tirmidhī was seeking to redefine religious knowledge as well as upset the prevailing hierarchy of prestige assigned to different types of religious knowledge in Khurāsān and Transoxania in his time. Changing the priority of knowledge-types, of course, had important implications for how religious men of learning were valued. In this category of works we have *Anwāʿ al-ʿIlm,* which addresses outward religious knowledge in juxtaposition to gnosis (*maʿrifa*). Al-Tirmidhī also discusses the different types and levels of servanthood in his book

Manāzil al-ʿIbād, which details seven stopping places (*manāzil*) that characterize different stages on the spiritual path (*ṭarīq*).

Moral and Ethical Teachings

Al-Tirmidhī was a teacher and orator as well as a writer and mystic. He was concerned with the moral and spiritual welfare of his students as well as those who came to hear him lecture. One book that indicates this aspect of his life and teaching is *al-Munājāt,* a series of prayers and supplications that express the dire helplessness of the servant who seeks God. Also written by al-Tirmidhī is *al-Jumal al-Lāzima Maʿrifatuhā,* a collection of sermons, or *waʿẓ*, that seek to admonish as well as entice the listener to refrain from acts of disobedience and then, in turn, to motivate the listener to strive toward embracing acts of obedience. In this vein we also have *al-Iḥṭiyāṭāṭ*, a compilation of advice for the spiritual traveler.

Correspondence

Al-Tirmidhī was not a reclusive mystic, but was involved in both teaching and the active scholarly debates of his time concerning matters related to spiritual development and mystical theory. For example, he was in letter correspondence with mystics in Rayy as well as Sarakhs[49] and this correspondence is recorded in two collections, *Jawāb Kitāb min al-Rayy* and *Jawāb al-Masāʾil allatī Saʾalahu Ahl Sarakhs ʿanhā*.

[49] Rayy is an important city in Khurāsān along the Silk Route. Sarakhs is also in Khurāsān but lies adjacent to the Silk Route.

Autobiography

Autobiography is included as a category even though there is only one work that is purely autobiographical in al-Tirmidhī's corpus. *Buduw Shaʾn* is a short work that is the earliest example of spiritual autobiography in the Islamic literary tradition. Al-Tirmidhī appears to have written about his life in order to establish the credentials of his spiritual rank and to support the authority with which he speaks. A brief description of his early years and spiritual conversion are followed by a series of dreams that are related on behalf of his wife and several male companions. These dreams speak for al-Tirmidhī without his having to claim sainthood himself. Al-Tirmidhī's autobiography provides us with a rare glimpse into the spiritual aspirations and struggles of an early mystic.

Secondary Sources

The study of sainthood in Khurāsān and Transoxania under the Samānids (204-395/819-1005) and Ghaznavids (366-582/977-1186) is an area that has received scant attention in the secondary literature, especially when we compare the scholarship on this period with the groundbreaking work of Vincent Cornell who discusses Moroccan sainthood and its typology during the Moroccan Mārinid (642-870/1244-1465) dynasty. Clearly, the pivotal figure for the study of sainthood in the East under the Saffārids (247-393/861-1003) and then the Samānids is al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Most studies of al-Tirmidhī, however, seek to place him in relation to the larger framework of Sufism, focusing on his unconformist approach as somewhat of an outsider. However, by approaching al-Tirmidhī from the standpoint of his gnoseology and discourse streams we are pushed to look beyond Sufism to better understand why he might be considered an 'outlier.' Sainthood is a *topos* that is not restricted to Islamic mysticism or Sufism, per se, but cuts across a diverse set of Islamic movements from Ahl al-Ḥadīth, to Khārijīs, to Shīʿīs. While

all of these groups exhibit various aspects of *walāya*, none of them presents an explicit doctrine of *walāya* before al-Tirmidhī's time. The problem in the field of Islamic mysticism is two-fold. Firstly, the discussion of al-Tirmidhī and his thought in the current literature, even his discussion on *walāya*, is often siloed within the field of Islamic mysticism. Secondly, and to our benefit, specialists on al-Tirmidhī such as Bernd Radtke, have focused on al-Tirmidhī's works from a highly textual perspective, treating al-Tirmidhī's writings almost as a system of its own. Yet, this does not address the more intricate relationship of al-Tirmidhī's concept of *walāya* to its use in other discourse streams current in al-Tirmidhī's time such as the Ḥanafī theological tradition. Radtke and John O'Kane (1996) have provided us with the best work to date on al-Tirmidhī and his ideas in *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism*. This work is a translation of *SA* into English with an introduction and explanatory notes. Radtke's work appears to focus primarily on the two books most associated with al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*: *SA* and *IA*. Another very important but overlooked resource for details of al-Tirmidhī's approach to *walāya* is his *NU*, a commentary by al-Tirmidhī on a selection of *aḥadīth* of the Prophet. In *CS* Radtke expresses the need for a systematic study of *NU*,[50] a text we already mentioned earlier under 'Sources.' Not only is *NU* al-Tirmidhī's longest work but it is also relatively unstructured, which leads the author to 'confess' aspects of his thought that might otherwise go unarticulated in his other works.

A second scholar who sought to seriously address the work of al-Tirmidhī is Yves Marquet whose dissertation, *al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī et Neplatonisme de son Temps*, compares the

[50] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *The concept of sainthood in early Islamic mysticism: two works by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī; an annotated translation with introduction*. Edited and translated by Bernd Radtke, John O'Kane Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press. 1996, p. 3.

cosmology of al-Tirmidhī with that of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā.[51] The comparison is useful in elucidating the way in which al-Tirmidhī and the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā both draw upon a similar corpus of material while also differing significantly in approach. For example, Marquet compares the hierarchy of spiritual degrees, light cosmogony and select mythology, such as the story of Adam and Eve, in both al-Tirmidhī and the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā. Marquet's work demonstrates that we are dealing with two very different systems of thought that seem to be drawing upon similar sources. While this is an important contribution to the study of al-Tirmidhī, it does not address specifically the subject of *walāya*. Furthermore, much of Marquet's work is based upon the seminal work of ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿAbdallāh Baraka, although a re-examination of Baraka's work on al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* can often suffice. However, neither Radtke, Marquet, nor Baraka deal with al-Tirmidhī's *KH*. As we will demonstrate in Chapters 2 and 5 al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* (wisdom) frames his doctrine of *walāya*. For this reason, my transcription of *KH* provides an important and unprecedented contribution to understanding al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*.

Another important work addressing the thought of al-Tirmidhī is that of Geneviève Gobillot whose dissertation situates al-Tirmidhī within the ideological milieu of 9th-century C.E. Khurasān. Her dissertation concludes with Gobillot's own translation into French of a disputed work attributed to al-Tirmidhī, *Ghawr al-Umūr.* Gobillot's work goes far in attempting to connect al-Tirmidhī to the Hellenistic milieu of Near Eastern thought, which was vibrant both before and after the advent of Islam, especially among Near Eastern elites. Other closer, and in some ways more significant, elements of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*, such as those contributed by Transoxanian Ḥanafī theology, are not addressed by Gobillot. In this way, I

[51] The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā are a group of Ismāʿīlī Shīʿīs in Iraq during the 10th-century C.E. who integrated Islamic mysticism with a number of other esoteric, philosophical and scientific approaches current during their time.

intend to build upon the work of Gobillot by identifying factors of influence that seem to have escaped her purview as I map out al-Tirmidhī's episteme.

Sara Sviri has written several important articles on various aspects of al-Tirmidhī's thought. Her article, "Hakīm al-Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism," addresses the relationship of al-Tirmidhī to current ascetic-mystical movements in Khurāsān during the 9th century C.E. Another article, "Words of Power and the Power of Words: Mystical Linguistics in the works of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī," helps us understand the similar 'letter-mysticism' that is shared by both the Rabbinic sages and al-Tirmidhī.

Both Chodkiewicz (1993) in *Seal of the Saints* and Elmore (1999) in *Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time,* have written extensively on the subject of sainthood in the writings of Ibn ʿArabī. In doing so, they both look upon al-Tirmidhī as a predecessor to Ibn ʿArabī, paving the way for the latter's ideas on *walāya*. Still, however, Ibn ʿArabī's debt to al-Tirmidhī's thought deserves much more attention and scholarship than it has thus far received. Hopefully, this study will pave the way for a closer look at the many parallels that exist between the two mystics. These parallels should become clearer once al-Tirmidhī's approach to *walāya* is better understood.

Thus far, the most important work that I have encountered during my research of al-Tirmidhī's writings on the subject of *walāya* is a book by ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿAbdallāh Baraka titled, *Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī wa Naẓariyyātahu fī l-Wilāyā*. It is the most exhaustive review of al-Tirmidhī's approach to *walāya* and contains detailed references made by later Islamic scholars of al-Tirmidhī and his thought. One major lacuna in his study, though, is the omission of both *NU* and *KH* from his presentation of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*. Another important area not addressed by Baraka is the non-Islamic material that informs al-Tirmidhī's views.

One of the possible reasons for the dearth of analytical works relating to al-Tirmidhī's thought is that much of the work on al-Tirmidhī has focused on making his corpus available to the scholarly community through published volumes and critical editions. Thanks to ʿUthmān Yaḥya, Bernd Radtke, and Tawfīq Maḥmūd Tekle we have critical editions of both *SA* as well as *NU*.

Chapter 1

The Historical and Social Context of

al-Tirmidhī's Life and Times

This chapter places al-Tirmidhī in his geographical and social context. Al-Tirmidhī's Arab descent and background as a member of the Sunnī scholarly class and landed patriciate played a role in his self-identity at a time of turmoil and change in Khurāsān and Transoxania. A particular social institution that was important in defining al-Tirmidhī's status, the social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*), played an important role in structuring al-Tirmidhī's notions of sainthood. While al-Tirmidhī criticizes the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*), his doctrine of sainthood, in fact, preserves the status of this class as it functions to preserve the social privilege inherent in the institution of clientage by protecting the privilege of the saints and therefore ultimately the *ʿulamāʾ*.

Al-Tirmidhī's Context

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was born during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Maʾmūn (d. 218/833) in the city of Tirmidh[52] in what is today the southern tip of Uzbekistan. For its day,

[52] The city of Tirmidh (Termez) is located in the southern tip of present day Uzbekistan just north of Afghanistan. Al-Muqaddasī (d. 990 CE) describes the city of Tirmidh less than a century after the death of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. It is the largest city situated on the Amū Daryā River, a river considered since ancient times to be the dividing line between Greater Iran (Khurāsān) and Tūrān (Transoxania). According to al-Muqaddasī, Tirmidh was a port city on the Amū Darya with accessibility to the river from both sides. The city had three gates with a central mosque inside the gates of the city. Connected to the city were suburbs with their own set of walls as a well as a commercial port (*sarādeqāt*) that formed a special quarter of the city. Homes would sometimes have outside patios that were paved with burnt brick and open air areas were sometimes covered with canopies. Al-Muqaddasī describes Tirmidh as 'clean' (*naẓīfa*) and 'healthy' (*ṭayyiba*). We might judge from these remarks that Tirmidh, unlike many other cities of the Iranian plateau during the 9th and 10th centuries C.E., did not experience a population explosion that led to dense numbers of immigrants settling outside its city walls. (For more on urbanization in early Islamic Iran see Bulliet, Richard. *Islam, the View from the Edge*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1993, p. 73.) Tirmidh today is one of the hottest cities in Central Asia with temperatures as high as 122 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months. Being a port city, Tirmidh was an important trade link between Khurāsān and Transoxania. Along with goods, ideas traveled these routes and al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was no doubt exposed to a wealth of culture and

Tirmidh was a medium-sized city that contained a citadel (*qahunduz*) outside the city walls. Its larger buildings were composed of mud brick rather than stone.[53] Tirmidh was under the administrative jurisdiction of Balkh under the Ṭāhirids (205-78/821-91) where al-Tirmidhī was taken for prosecution when the local scholars of Tirmidh accused him of discoursing on the topic of love (*ḥubb*). The Ṭāhirids were the governors of Khurāsān and Transoxania for much of al-Tirmidhī's life. They were briefly followed by the Saffārids[54] and then the Samānids (204-395/819-1005) after them. Al-Tirmidhī references the brief interlude of the Saffārids in his autobiography (*Buduw Shaʾn*) when he states that "there arose in our land discord and insurrection."[55] Al-Tirmidhī is referring to the event in which Dāwūd b. al-ʿAbbas al-Bānijūrī, the Ṭāhirid governor in Balkh, was forced to flee in 870 C.E. when the Saffārid Yaʿqūb b. Layth laid siege to that city.

thought. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī. *Kitāb aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*. Leiden: Brill. 1906, p. 291.

[53] The city of Tirmidh included several smaller cities and rural villages that fell under its jurisdiction and that supported its urban life. These were Ṣarmanjī, Hāshim Jard, Nawdaz and al-Qawādhiyān (a city much smaller than Tirmidh but still supporting its own farming villages). Tirmidh was still smaller than the main metropolitan center of Samarqand whose population may have been as much as 120,000 inhabitants in the 9th-century C.E. This estimate is based on the archeological evidence suggesting that the city (*shahrestān*) of Samarqand reached close to seven and a half square miles. G. A. Pugachenkova and E. V. Rtveladze. "Archeology vii. Islamic Central Asia," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, Vol. II, Fasc. 3, pp. 322–326; available online at: http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/archeology-vii. This city was a little larger than Nīshāpūr close to the same time period whose city measured approximately six and a half square miles. Richard Bulliet estimates that Nīshāpūr's population was approximately 100,000 inhabitants taking a safe estimate. We might guess that the population of Tirmidh might be somewhere close to 30–40,000 inhabitants. Richard W. Bulliet. *The patricians of Nishapur; a study in medieval Islamic social history*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972, p. 9.

[54] While the Saffārid line continued until the beginning of the 11th century C.E. in the region of Sistān, the Saffārids lost Khurāsān and Transoxiana to the Samānids when Abū Ibrāhīm Ismāʿīl (I) (279–95/892–907) captured the Saffārid ʿAmr b. al-Layth in 287/900, after which the Caliph al-Muʿtaḍid appointed him governor of both Transoxania and Khurāsān. "Sāmānids." *EI2*, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 18 November 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/sa-ma-nids-COM_0995>

[55] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *The concept of sainthood in early Islamic mysticism: two works by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī; an annotated translation with introduction*. Ed. Bernd Radtke, John O'Kane. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press. 1996, pp. 20–23.

Al-Tirmidhī came from a family whose ancestral roots go back to the original Arabs who settled in the region soon after the early Arab/Islamic conquests. His family was composed of wealthy landholders who cultivated religious learning and belonged to the local aristocracy[56] of Tirmidh. Their status was similar in nature to the patrician families of Nīshāpūr, which was a city larger than Tirmidh but still in its same cultural orbit. Al-Tirmidhī's father was a scholar who was known to have visited Baghdād and related Ḥadīth there[57] and, as we will discuss in Chapter 3, al-Tirmidhī continued this scholarly tradition as part of the Ḥanafī jurisprudential and theological tradition that was widespread in the eastern provinces during his time. Nevertheless, we find in al-Tirmidhī a desire to expand beyond the confines of previous modes of thought when we witness the manner in which he exhibits an unflinching insistence on following his own intuitions rather than bow to the dictates of the various factions and schools in his city.[58] As part of this process, he actually retreated from the factionalist tendencies of his city to the private space of his home where he established what we may call a 'salon' (*mujālasa*). There he conducted semi-private meetings of like-minded individuals who met to discuss spiritual matters and to engage in the invocation of God (*dhikr*).[59] Not only does al-Tirmidhī turn to close friends

[56] We would consider al-Tirmidhī to belong to what Bulliet calls the Patriciate in early Islamic Iranian cities. These were a group of families who consistently held much of the power in the cities of Khurāsān and Transoxiana, excluding the transient governors and imperial agents who came and went. These families were usually of three types, either landholding, trading or religious families. Ibid. *Patricians*, pp. 20-21.

[57] Bernd Radtke. *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmiḏī: ein islamischer Theosoph des 3./9. [i.e. 8./9.] Jahrhunderts*. Freiburg: K. Schwarz, 1990, p. 12.

[58] In his autobiography al-Tirmidhī explains how he was regaled by the local scholars of his city for his ascetic and anti-social behavior as a result of his endeavor to grow closer to God. Al-Tirmidhī explains that he cared nothing for what they said and continued with his spiritual exercises until he was called before the governor at Balkh to stand trial for heresy. Ibid. *Concept*, p. 20.

[59] While this may seem benign and rather ordinary to the modern sensibilities it clearly was not so in al-Tirmidhī's 9th-century CE, Transoxania. Religious learning was accessible and usually conducted in public places such as the local *jāmiʿ masjid* or congregational mosque. The gatherings of the early mystics in Iraq, Khurāsān and Transoxiana were semi-private events that were often conducted in the homes of participants or wealthy patrons. These gatherings were characterized by an informal discourse on mystical topics between like-minded individuals, a very different scene than is found several centuries later in Nīshāpūr, where Ṣūfī culture and lore are organized by highly formal structures that mediate teacher-student roles. The early Islamic mystics followed a pattern already in practice in the large urban centers of Islam during the 9th-century C.E., where the *mujālasāt* of *adab* or edifying circles of humanistic knowledge was in vogue. For more on early salons in the Islamic world see Samer Ali's work: Ali,

who share his interests in mysticism, but he also includes his wife in these discourses and relates a number of her dreams, which signifies not only his own spiritual rank, but her exalted status as a *waliyya* (female saint of God)[60] as well. It must be noted that Al-Tirmidhī was not merely a renegade who wanted to break free of the social and intellectual mores of his time. He was an accomplished scholar in all of the major disciplines of Islamic scholarship as his many books and short treatises attest. We can describe him as an encyclopedist of sorts who sought to unify Islamic thought under one single approach. Like Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī after him, al-Tirmidhī was scathing in his criticism of a scholarly class whom he considered to have lost the original prophetic vision of Islam. In this way he was also a social critic who wished to reform the social class that he represented. His goal was an ethical one just as much as it was mystical. For example, Al-Tirmidhī expounds on the importance of ethics when he discusses the three stages of good character. The first is to have good character with respect to God's commands and prohibitions. This is at the level of law. The second stage is to have good character with all created things (*khalq*, which also can mean all human beings). The third is to have good character with God's pre-ordainment.[61] This is an example of al-Tirmidhī's consistent attempt to extend Islamic values beyond the boundaries of Islam as a faith. This sense of ethics led him to defend the weaker elements of his society by, for example, calling for the good treatment of

Samer M. *Arabic literary salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: poetry, public performance, and the presentation of the past*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press. 2010. Al-Tirmidhī was not alone in his desire to converse with like-minded mystics about the love God and mystical states. The Inquisition of Ghulām Khalīl (d. 275/888) targeted those discoursing on love (*ḥubb*). The problem was not that these mystics were experiencing love of God. This theme had been in circulation for quite some time in Islamic societies at least since the 2nd Islamic century (8th-century C.E.) with the early love poetry of the likes of Rābiʿa al-ʿAdawiyya. I would venture to posit that the strong reaction on the part of the Abbasid authorities was the fact that these discourses on love were happening in new social structures outside of the purview of the recently ascendant *ʿulamāʾ* (scholarly class).

[60] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 24–36.

[61] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 215. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī distinguishes between "natural" good character shared by all human beings and the highest forms of good character brought by the Prophet. *Ibid. Nawādir*, vol. 4, pp. 341–356.

slaves.[62] Yet, Al-Tirmidhī was not an egalitarian nor could he be considered a social revolutionary. While he called for the good treatment of slaves he also recognized the slave-owner's right to discipline within measure. His views on women were typical if not slightly more advanced than his time. He upheld the notion that women should not be taught to write because writing was a type of communication that exceeded speech, which could lead to temptation (*fitna*).[63] According to al-Tirmidhī women are inferior to men because they come from a part of men (from Adam's rib).[64] He also viewed women as a source of temptation for men who even tempted the greatest of the prophets.[65] Despite these views it is clear that he had a deep and meaningful relationship with his wife that was respectful and collegial in nature. His autobiography indicates that they used to share their spiritual dreams with one another and that the dreams themselves sometimes expressed intimate moments such as when they were both lying in bed and the Prophet entered the bed with them.[66] For al-Tirmidhī, these dreams are highly significant because they are a means of communication from the divine to the human being.[67]

Al-Tirmidhī spoke both Arabic and Persian fluently. We often find Persian words peppered throughout his many works for the purpose of clarifying the meaning of an Arabic

[62] Ibid, p. 21.
[63] Ibid, p. 271.
[64] Ibid, p. 271.
[65] Al-Tirmidhī highlights the stories of three prophets who were tempted by women as to indicate the station of each of these in the way he dealt with this temptation. The first was the Prophet Dāwūd (David) who was tempted by Bathsheba and sent her husband to death in order to marry her. His kingdom goes to ruin until he repents. The second was Yūsuf (Joseph) who was tempted by Potiphar's wife and according to al-Tirmidhī almost commits the act but turns away at the last minute and is imprisoned as a result. This is an example of a higher station. Finally, he gives the example of the Prophet Muḥammad who is tempted by Zaynab and his reaction is to go into seclusion. The result is that she is married to him by God. Ibid, pp 248–252.
[66] Al-Tirmidhī clearly saw this as an auspicious omen. Dreams are interpreted symbolically in the Arab/Islamic tradition of dream interpretation such as with the likes of Ibn Sīrīn whose book of dream interpretation provides meanings for stock symbols within dreams.
[67] Al-Tirmidhī quotes a prophetic tradition to the effect that true dreams are a part of prophecy. Dreams that contain the Prophet are considered to always be true dreams. Ibid. *Concept*, p. 9.

word.[68] It is not clear whether al-Tirmdhī's wife spoke Arabic or not, but she clearly spoke Persian. In many respects we can think of al-Tirmidhī as a gentrified Persian landholder (*dihqān*)[69] if it were not for his vehement defense of Arabic as the greatest and most important of languages and of the Arabs as the best of peoples.[70] Al-Tirmidhī's remarks remind us of the Shuʿūbī and anti-Shuʿūbī movements during the 2nd- and 3rd- Islamic centuries (8th- and 9th-centuries C.E.) in which non-Arabs (*ʿajam*) wrote literature that claimed superiority over Arab culture. Arab writers (often of non-Arab origin themselves, such as Ibn Qutayba) wrote in defense of Arab superiority and lineage.[71] According to al-Tirmidhī, the Arabs were superior to the Persians (*ʿajam*) not because of the superiority of Arabic as a language but because the Arabs held more noble qualities and higher character traits than the Persians, in particular, generosity.[72] While noble Arab descent, for al-Tirmidhī, was a source of privilege in the larger Islamic community (*umma*), it was only applicable if the Arab actually displayed those high character traits.[73] While al-Tirmidhī's views of Arab superiority are tempered by his ethical standards, he elevates the Arabic language to cosmological significance in his gnoseology. One of the highest forms of knowledge, the highest wisdom (*ḥikmat al-ʿulyā*) is the knowledge of the letters (Arabic letters).[74] Al-Tirmidhī upheld and justified the social hierarchy of his society that placed him in a

[68] See Radtke's list of Persian words compiled from al-Tirmidhī's writings. Ibid. *Ein islamischer Theosoph*, p. 137.
[69] Francesco Chiabotti problematizes this term as it came to change over time referring in the Sasanid period to a village chief and member of the Sasanid landed aristocracy. With the development of the *iqṭāʿ* land system, this important class lost much of its status and the term came to designate later in the Abbasid period a country peasant. Francesco Chiabotti. *Entre soufisme et savoir islamique: l'oeuvre de ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī (376-465/ 986-1072)*. Diss, Universite de Provence. 2014, p. 63.
[70] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 309.
[71] Roy P. Mottahedeh. "The Shuʿūbiyah Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol. 7, No. 2 (Apr., 1976), pp. 161–182.
[72] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 310.
[73] Ibid, p. 107.
[74] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 83.

position of power and authority, but he considered this privilege to be predicated on virtue and not lineage. This is one of the reasons that he strongly opposed the Shīʿī position on the imamate.

Al-Tirmidhī's Clash with the Local *ʿUlamāʾ*

Al-Tirmidhī chose to begin teaching his mystical ideas from his home rather than from the local *jāmiʿ masjid* (congregational mosque). However, the numbers of those who came to his circle (*majlis*) grew so numerous that his house could no longer accommodate them. Eventually, the lane near his house filled up and then his students took him to the local *masjid*. Finally, he began teaching at a larger *masjid*, probably the central congregational *masjid* of Tirmidh.[75] In his autobiography, al-Tirmidhī describes how it was a group of his original detractors who attempted to approach him in private about his ideas. When he finally agreed to speak to them, they were mesmerized by his speech and became his students. After he had become well known and had attracted many students, his other detractors among the scholars of the city could not sustain their criticism of him. Al-Tirmidhī's trials and eventual triumph over his detractors among the scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) of Tirmidh exemplifies Richard Bulliet's thesis about the structure of the Patriciate in Nīshāpūr during the 4th- and 5th- Islamic centuries (10th- and 11th-centuries C.E.). According to Bulliet, the patricians were a set of landowning, merchant and religious families often combining all three groups who controlled the city of Nīshāpūr from generation to generation for over a hundred and fifty years. It was the delicate balance of power between these families and their various factions that preserved harmony in Nīshāpūr. When this balance of power was lost, the city descended into intra-urban warfare and the city was eventually destroyed.

[75] Ibid, p. 23.

Al-Tirmidhī was clearly a member of such a class in his city of Tirmidh, coming from a landholding scholarly family of Arab descent. When the faction that opposed al-Tirmidhī was successful in bringing him before the governor's court in Balkh on charges of heresy, it was the Ḥanafīs who protected him and enabled him to return to his city. This is why the content and nature of what al-Tirmidhī was teaching, as well as where he was teaching, is significant. By teaching from his home, al-Tirmidhī was easily subject to labels of heresy because his teachings were not being overseen by the establishment of religious notables. If he had not been from the patrician class himself, he probably would not have been considered such a threat to the established order. Bulliet's (1997), in *The View from the Edge*, argues that Islam during the 3rd, 4th- and 5th- Islamic centuries (9th-, 10th- and 11th-centuries C.E.) looks different when viewed from the edge rather than the center (i.e., Baghdād). When we turn our attention away from the centers of power (specifically in Khurasān and Transoxiana) during this period, we find a pattern in which non-Arab converts are seeking answers to their questions about Islam.[76] Al-Tirmidhī's book, *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* (*The Way of the Saints*), is structured in a question and answer format as a dialog between al-Tirmidhī and one of his students.[77] At one point, al-Tirmidhī became exasperated by a question from one of his students and he exclaims, "*Yā ʿajam*!" This literally means, "You Persians!" Bernd Radtke posits that al-Tirmidhī must be using this phrase to mean something like, "You fools!" Even if this was the intended meaning it reveals important information about al-Tirmidhī's sense of privilege and his critical view of those who were not

[76] Bulliet follows the life of a Persian soldier Abū Ṭayba whose great grandfather converted to Islam and who settles in Jurjān seeking and finding religious guidance. The 9th century CE witnessed some of the highest rates of urbanization in the history of Persia. This also coincided with the fastest period of conversion to Islam. It is during this period that the function of the *faqīh* develops as someone who is consulted about religious legal matters. Richard W. Bulliet. *Islam: the view from the edge*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 93.
[77] This dialog is not Socratic in nature in that it does not aim at taking the student through a logical argument but is more al-Tirmidhī answering the questions about sainthood that were common in his time such as whether or not a saint can be greater than a prophet.

versed in the Arabic language.[78] In other instances al-Tirmidhī shows a caring and concerned attitude toward his students.[79] In both cases he assumes a position of authority and distinction above his questioner. His wisdom and knowledge were also sought by non-Muslims and non-Arabs who were seeking guidance and answers to life-questions that would help them to make sense of their world.[80]

The Scholarly Class or the *ʿUlamāʾ*

Al-Tirmidhī hailed from a family of *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars) and belonged to this class himself, but was also highly critical of this group. He called them *ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir* (scholars of the outward), or scholars who were well versed in legal and theological doctrines but whose inward character traits belied their knowledge. He militated against the idea that Fiqh (jurisprudence) and Kalām (theology) were the totality of what God meant when he referred to knowledge (*ʿilm*) in the Qurʾān.[81] In order to better situate al-Tirmidhī, we need to understand this religious class and how it related to other social groups in the 9th century C.E. During this time we first start to see the term *faqīh* (jurisprudent) being used in biographical dictionaries, but it is not until the 10th- and 11th-centuries C.E. in Khurāsān and Transoxania that this term begins to gain wide use.[82] We have already explained how, if we take a view from the edge, the *ʿulamāʾ*

[78] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 202.
[79] Ibid, p. 114. Al-Tirmidhī shows concern for the student who asks a question for which he is not ready to hear the answer.
[80] This was a similar phenomenon that took place with the development of Rabbinic Judaism. According to Seth Schwartz (2001) the Rabbis, not just as a class of legal experts but as leaders of the Jewish community, came into their position of authority when Jews from various diaspora communities began turning to them for answers to their questions about how to live a Jewish life.
[81] Al-Tirmidhī anticipated Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī's (d. 504/1111) criticism of the *ʿulamāʾ* in his *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* by almost two hundred years. Al-Tirmidhī describes the true *faqīh* (not jurisprudent here but "man of understanding") as someone who "…the veil has been lifted from the eye of his heart," and not someone who "…associates himself with the discipline of *fiqh*." Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *ʿIlm al-awliyāʾ*. Ed. By Sāmī Naṣr Luṭf. [Cairo]: Maktabat al-Ḥurrīyah al-Ḥadīthah. 1983, p. 138.
[82] Ibid. *The View from the Edge*, p. 93.

families constitute one of the pillars of urban social life in the early Abbasid period. However, it is also important to go back to the center to see how the struggle for power and authority in Islam was shaping the development of this important social class as it affected developments on the edge. Most historians of early Islam consider the Miḥna[83] to have been the decisive struggle for religious authority in Islam between the Caliph and the *ʿulamāʾ*.[84] Muḥammad Qāsim Zamān shows, with some success, that such a break was not as complete as once thought and the Abbasid caliphs continued to exercise a role in juridical and theological debates even after the *Miḥna*. Despite Zaman's evidence, it is clear that after the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 247/861) and with the ending of the *Miḥna*, the Abbasid caliphs could not steer the religious discourse in the same way as al-Maʾmūn (d. 218/833) and al-Mutawakkil had done.[85] The Abbasid Empire was fighting for its very life at the end of the 9th century C.E. The assumption among many historians is that when the caliphs lost control of the religious discourse (and thus religious authority), it was the *ʿulamāʾ* who automatically assumed this authority. John Turner (2001), (building on the work of Josef van Ess), demonstrates that Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), the archetypal Sunnī hero, was actually quite low in profile and apolitical in his stance toward the caliphs. The early evidence points to him as acquiescing to the Caliph's order to affirm the createdness of the Qurʾān rather than refusing to do so. Turner's thesis is that a 'showdown' between the Caliph and Ibn Ḥanbal was the product of a later rewriting of the narrative and was a tool used by the Ḥanabila to assert their authoritative position among the

[83] The Miḥna was the inquisition instituted by the Abbasid Caliph al-Maʾmūn in a struggle between the Caliph and the *ʿulamāʾ* (scholarly class) over religious authority in Islam. Al-Maʾmūn sought to impose a Muʿtazilī theological viewpoint on scholars appointed as judges within the Abbasid Caliphate.
[84] Muḥammad Qasim Zamān. *Religion and politics under the early ʿAbbāsids: the emergence of the proto-Sunnī elite*. Leiden: Brill. 1997, p. 70.
[85] Hugh Kennedy. *The court of the Caliphs: the rise and fall of Islam's greatest dynasty*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2004, pp. 294-295.

madhhabs.[86] By the time of the reign of the Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadir (295–320/908–925), the caliph was no longer seen as the source of religious doctrine and the climate at the caliphal court had become antagonistic to religious learning.[87] The attempt by caliphs such as al-Maʾmūn and al-Mutawakkil to engage directly in religious doctrine was bound to fail since the *ʿulamāʾ* gave no place to caliphs, viziers, assemblies of notables, or even the people, to produce laws, commandments, prohibitions or statutes of their own accord.[88] Rather, without caliphal guidance in the religious discourse after al-Mutawakkil, we find a vacuum of religious authority that initiates a contest among the various legal *madhāhib* and various Islamic sects for the supremacy of their particular viewpoint. From the late 9th-century through the 11th-century C.E. the default method for mediating conflicting religious viewpoints was through mob rioting in the streets.[89] Even if the caliph was not a legislator, the caliph saw his role as a mediator between various proto-Sunnī and proto-Shīʿī factions. After al-Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliphs were no longer able to play this role and the intense factionalism that resulted created the background out of which Sunnism and Shīʿism developed.[90] Back in the city of Tirmidh, al-Tirmidhī voices his

[86] John Persons Turner. *Inquisition and the definition of identity in early Abbasid history*. 2001, Thesis (Ph. D.)--University of Michigan, 2001. http://books.google.com/books?id=f7QfAQAAMAAJ, pp. 271–273.
[87] Maaike van Berkel. *Crisis and continuity at the Abbasid court formal and informal politics in the caliphate of al-Muqtadir (295–320/908–32)*. Leiden: Brill. 2013, pp. 210–211. http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/9789004252707.
[88] Jacob Lassner and Michael David Bonner. *Islam in the Middle Ages: the origins and shaping of classical Islamic civilization*. Santa Barbara, Calif: Praeger. 2010, pp. 238. As early as al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) and even before him we find that the four sources of Islamic law (Qurʾān, Ḥadīth, *ijmāʿ* and *qiyās*) leave no place for caliphal intervention.
[89] Popular violence began to play an important role in the way the Ḥanābila dealt with their adversaries such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923). *Inquisition*, p. 270. The same type of popular violence plays a role in the late 11th-century when Ibn al-Qushayrī comes to Baghdād to teach at the Niẓāmiyya. These riots between the Ashʿarīs and Ḥanbalīs were symptomatic of the decentralized nature of religious authority. Eric J. Hanne. *Putting the caliph in his place: power, authority, and the late Abbasid Caliphate*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press. 2007, pp. 120–121. Baghdād was not the only place where rioting took place between various legal and theological factions. Bulliet documents the sectarian violence between Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs in Nīshāpūr and other cities of Khurasān and Transoxiana that led to the eventual demise of some of these cities even before the Mongol invasions. Ibid. *Patricians*, p. 31.
[90] I am looking at Sunnism here as an identity that resulted from a détente between the various *madhhāhib* (schools of law and jurisprudence) that take their inspiration from the major collections of Ḥadīth literature (the six books of Hadith). This approach is best summarized by al-Ghazālī in his *Fayṣal al-Tafriqa* in which he seeks to demonstrate that the various schools of jurisprudence and theology differ in their interpretations only as the result of the different

frustration at the factionalism of his time, *innamā ṣārū hāʾulāʾi firaqan li-annahum fāraqū dīnahum fa-bi-mufāraqati al-dīn tashattatat ahwāʾuhum fa-iftaraqū*, "These have only become various sects because they have separated themselves from their religion and through their separation from the true religion, their vain opinions have diverged and so they became sectarian."[91]

The Shīʿīs and the Ṣūfī Alternative

The development of Shīʿism and Sunnism as distinct viewpoints in Islam can be traced to the breakdown of Abbasid religious authority that occurred in the second half of the 9th-century C.E. It is no doubt that proto-Sunnī and proto-Shīʿī viewpoints had existed since early Islam. However, the need for a 'real' *khalīfa* for the Shīʿīs appeared in the form of ʿUbayd Allāh al-Mahdī Billāh, supported by the Ismāʿīlī missionary (*dāʿī*) Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Shīʿī, who proclaimed ʿUbayd Allāh as Amīr al-Muʾminīn at the Aghlabid capital of Raqqāda in 910 C.E.[92] The Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* started spreading his message among the Kutāma Berbers from 280/893 onwards. At the same time the Twelver Shīʿīs were working out their doctrine of the lesser and greater occultation (*ghayba*). The doctrine of occultation served to preserve the *imām*/*khalīfa* at first as a hidden and then as a transcendental figure. The Ismāʿīlīs and the Twelver or Imāmī

existential planes upon which they base their thinking. Al-Ghazālī's underlying message is that these various schools should accept each other as equally valid. We should move away from an orthodoxy/heresy dichotomy when discussing Sunnism and Shīʾism because we find in Islamic 'heresiographical' works such as *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/936–936) that the approach is more of a 'distance from an assumed norm' than a clear label of heresy applied to various 'Islamic' groups.

[91] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 183-184. Al-Tirmidhī uses the word *iftaraqū* (to become sectarian) in opposition to the word *ikhtalafū* (to differ in opinion). According to him the true scholars (*al-ʿulamāʾ*) are those whose beliefs do not cause them to separate themselves from the majority (*al-sawād al-aʿẓam* literally "the great multitude").

[92] Marius Canard. "Fāṭimids." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 26 November 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/fa-t-imids-COM_0218>

Shīʿīs represent attempts to find alternative modes of religious authority in a period of upheaval when the Abbasid Caliph was no longer able to engage in the role of religious arbiter. It was not until the end of the 9th-century and first part of the 10th-century C.E. that these groups became explicit in the formulation of their respective doctrines.[93] Thus, when we examine the various Shīʿī responses to this period of instability and loss of religious authority, we must also look at what the various Sunnī responses were. By the 9th-century C.E. proto-Sunnī legal scholars such as al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) had established the view that the prophetic *Sunna* overrode other forms of *sunna* and a general consensus developed over the sources of Islamic law.[94] However, the legal scholar alone did not have enough authority to stem the tide of the factionalism, inter-*madhhab* rivalry and conflict, which had gained momentum after al-Mutawakkil until the ascendancy of the Seljuks (1037–1194 C.E.) who imposed uniformity and their own form of orthodoxy on the fragmented religious landscape that they inherited.[95] Clearly there was a movement among the proto-Sunnīs who saw the legal scholar as an arbiter of religious authority. The Ḥadīth text oft-cited by Sunnī scholars to this effect is the *ḥadīth* narrated by al-Tirmidhī[96] that states, *al-ʿulamāʾ warathat al-anbiyāʾ*, "The scholars are the inheritors of the prophets." In

[93] Shīʿī and pro-Alid sentiments were widespread among what we would call proto-Sunnīs as well since early Islam. The Abbasid Caliphate, for example, came to power amid a wave of pro-Alid sentiment. The Caliph al-Maʾmūn played with the idea of naming the Shīʿī Imam ʿAlī al-Riḍā (d. 202/818) as his successor to the caliphate. The polemical term *rāfiḍī* (denier) was used by many proto-Sunnīs to indicate someone who denied the caliphates of *al-shaykhayn* (the two *shaykhs*), i.e., Abū Bakr (d. 13/634) and ʿUmar (d. 23/644). The term doesn't refer to the Shīʿīs as a particular sect with a set of separate theological beliefs distinctly different than Sunnīs. It is at the end of the 9th century CE that we see a separate Shīʿī identity with the appearance of the first Shīʿī "heresiography" by al-Ḥasan b. Mūsa al-Nawbakhtī titled *Firaq al-Shīʿa*. For more on this alternative view of the development of Shīʿīsm see Mashall Hodgson's article, "How did the Early Shīʿa become Sectarian?" Marshall G. S. Hodgson. 1955. "How Did the Early Shīʿa become Sectarian?" Journal of the American Oriental Society. 75 (1): 1-13.

[94] Takim, Liyakatali. *The heirs of the prophet charisma and religious authority in Shi'ite Islam*. Albany: State University of New York Press. 2006, p. 23. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=169518.

[95] Safi, Omid. *The politics of knowledge in premodern Islam negotiating ideology and religious inquiry*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2006, p. 9. http://site.ebrary.com/id/10273394.

[96] This is a different al-Tirmidhī than the one we have been studying so far. This is Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) the Ḥadīth scholar, whose collection of Ḥadīth is considered one of the six authentic collections of Sunnī Ḥadīth.

some versions of this *ḥadīth* the term *khulafāʾ* (caliphs) is used as a term indicating authority.[97] The legal scholar (*faqīh*) was not in a position that was strong enough, though, to claim religious authority among Sunnīs because he was only an 'interpreter' of the Sharīʿa and could not claim direct knowledge from God as the Shīʿī *imām* could do. This was because the caliph still reserved the right to appoint judges (*ḥukkām*) and in this capacity controlled who it was that would assume the role of arbiter of religious law. The *faqīh* could answer legal questions and provide legal opinions but had no power to impose his particular viewpoint on others. The struggle for religious authority between the caliph and the scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) left both of these groups compromised in terms of their ultimate religious authority. The Ḥadīth scholar (*muḥaddith*) and the theologian (*mutakallim*) were similarly bound by their particular school and could not impose their doctrines for the advancement of their causes, except by appealing to others in power, such as the political rulers of the day.

It is in this climate of competing notions of authority from the late 9th to the beginning of the 11th-century C.E. that we find a new type of identity and religious authority developing among the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* in the form of the Ṣūfī *shaykh*. The Ṣūfī *shaykh* obtains his authority through his *maʿrifa* (divine knowledge directly from God) and claims a position of authority above that of the outward religious scholar (*al-ʿālim al-ẓāhir*). We have to remember that Ṣūfīs in the eastern Islamic lands evolved out of the establishment of religious scholars themselves and so, rather than contesting the authority of the *ʿulamāʾ*, the Ṣūfīs made religious learning an important part of Ṣūfī identity. This structure is clearly proposed in the first Ṣūfī manual *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ* by Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988). Al-Sarrāj claims that the *fuqahāʾ*

[97] The term *khalīfa*, plural: *khulafāʾ*, is used to refer to the successor of Muhammad, the final prophet of Islam. Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds (1986) demonstrate that both the term *khalīfat al-rasūl* (successor to the Messenger) as well as *khalīfat Allāh* (successor of God) were both used by various groups to make claims of religious authority in early Islam.

(legal scholars) are above the Ahl al-Ḥadīth (Traditionalists)[98] who only understand the outward purport of the Ḥadīth.[99] He then places the Ṣūfīs above the *fuqahāʾ* as long as the Ṣūfīs have gained the same outward knowledge as the Ahl al-Ḥadīth and the *fuqahāʾ*. Otherwise, the Ṣūfī must follow these scholars of outward knowledge.[100] According to al-Sarrāj, the Ṣūfī is on a higher level than the lower two categories because he can 'choose' between the various *madhāhib* (schools of law and theology) for what he considers to be most cautious in religious matters.[101] In this view the ideal Ṣūfī should hail from the *ʿulamāʾ* in order to represent the highest level of attainment, which combines both outward religious knowledge and inward spiritual knowledge from God (*maʿrifa*). It is this inward spiritual knowledge from God that bestows religious authority upon the Ṣūfī, and as a result, the Ṣūfīs are able to solve legal and theological conundrums through their *maʿrifa* that would stymie the scholars of outward knowledge.[102] Al-Sarrāj states that the *fuqahāʾ* are those who should be followed in religious matters. They do constitute a type of religious authority in his estimation, however, he places the Ṣūfī *faqīh* above the non-Ṣūfī *faqīh*. Thus, within the scholarly class the Ṣūfī *shaykh* is elevated above the scholar of jurisprudence (*faqīh*).[103] We are not claiming that Sufism overrode juridical identities, but that Sufism incorporated and reconfigured juridical identities within the larger framework of Sufism as a meta-*madhhab*. Eventually, as Sufism developed into a formal Muslim identity there were attempts to submerge the juridical identity into the Sufi identity as reflected

[98] 'Traditionists' are those who specialize in narrating Ḥadīth whereas 'Traditionalists' represent a conservative school of thought that eschews theological speculation and practices *takyīf* (not asking how) with respect to Qurʾānic verses and Ḥadīth about God that are not clearly understandable. Some Traditionalists take these verses and prophetic traditions literally.
[99] Abū Naṣr ʿAbdallāh bin ʿAlī al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī. *The Kitāb al-Lumaʿ fī al-Ṭaṣawwuf of Abū Naṣr ʿAbdallāh bin ʿAlī al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī.* Edited for the first time, with critical notes, abstract of contents, glossary, and indices by Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, etc. E.J. Brill: Leyden; Luzac & Co.: London. 1914, p. 8.
[100] Ibid, pp. 10–11.
[101] Ibid, p. 11.
[102] Ibid, p. 15.
[103] Ibid, p. 10.

in the work of Ibn ʿArabī and other Ṣūfīs who attempted to unify the juridical *madhāhib* under one framework. Therefore we can see Sufism in its mature form as one of the Sunnī responses to the restructuring of religious authority from the end of the 9th century C.E. to the end of the 11th-century C.E. was to posit the *ʿulamāʾ* as custodians of this authority in the form of the Ṣūfī *shaykh.*[104] This was because a group of these *ʿulamāʾ* realized that the *fuqahāʾ* (legal scholars), the *mutakallimūn* (theologians) and the more conservative elements of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth could not rise above their factionalism. A movement that started in Baghdād at the end of the 9th century C.E. (the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād) provided a solution to the dilemma of inter-*madhhab* rivalry by proffering a Sunnī identity that could successfully rise above the factionalism among the various Sunnī *madhāhib*.[105] Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* such as al-Sarrāj were inspired by the Baghdād Ṣūfīs and sought to promote their vision of Islam, however, the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād themselves did not have a strong claim to religious authority despite the attempts of those like al-Sarrāj to place them in the highest rung of the *ʿulamāʾ*.[106] It was al-Tirmidhī's concept of sainthood and religious authority that would provide the needed theoretical basis for the claim of Ṣūfī authority as the true inheritor of prophetic charisma to supersede the waning authority of the Abbasid Caliphs as well as the compromised authority of the *ʿulamāʾ*. We will demonstrate in Chapter 4 how al-Sulamī combined these two trends to create a powerful synthesis that became the basic

[104] Ibid. *Heirs of the Prophet*, pp. 181–182.

[105] Ahmed Karamustafa characterizes the early Ṣūfīs of Baghdād as an avant-garde, hip movement that sought to challenge the interpretive authority of the more conservative element of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth community. Karamustafa, Ahmet T. *Sufism the formative period*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2007, p. 7. The Ṣūfī of Baghdād at the end of the 9th-century C.E. and beginning of the 10th-century C.E. came from many different legal and theological backgrounds. The Ṣūfīs of Baghdād demonstrated that the different strands of the larger Ahl al-Ḥadīth community, including the various legal and theological schools could be unified under a common identity. This new identity was harnessed by later Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* who were looking for a way to unify the various Sunnī *madhāhib* (schools)

[106] The Ṣūfīs of Baghdād claimed special knowledge from God (*maʿrifa*) but did not seek to contest the political and religious authorities of their time. Rather, al-Junayd remained apolitical and low profile on social issues and points of religious doctrine as the events of the Miḥna demonstrated. Alexander D. Knysh. *Islamic mysticism a short history*. Leiden: Brill. 2010, pp. 55–56.

pattern for normative Sufism. We term this normative Ṣūfī synthesis that occurred in Nīshāpūr during the late 10th- and early 11th-centuries C.E., "the great mystical synthesis of the 5th- Islamic century."

Al-Tirmidhī and the Shīʿī Challenge

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, like Abū al-Qāsim al-Junayd (d. 298/910) and many of the early Ṣūfīs of Baghdād during the 9th-century C.E., belonged to the class of proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*.[107] These *ʿulamāʾ* recognized the Ḥadīth traditions of the *ṣaḥāba* (companions) of the Prophet as authoritative as opposed to the Shīʿīs who were developing their own corpus of Akhbār (oral traditions) of both the Prophet and the Shīʿī imams. At the end of the 9th-century C.E. al-Tirmidhī was writing polemical works against the *rāfiḍa*[108] (the Shīʿīs) and the Shīʿī challenge is palpable throughout his works. For proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* like al-Tirmidhī the Shīʿī challenge was real and the political events of the following century proved how real it was. By 945 C.E. a Zaydī Shīʿī dynasty from Dailam in Northern Iran had captured Bahgdad and had become the de facto rulers of the Abbasid Empire maintaining the Abbasid Caliph as a figurehead. In 969 C.E. the Fatimids, an Ismāʿīlī Shīʿī movement, set up a counter caliphate based in Cairo, Egypt. Momentum had been growing since the latter part of the 9th-century C.E. for a solution to the religio-political crisis in authority that was occurring under the Abbasids.[109] It was not only the

[107] I call these the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* because while they ascribe to a similar Ḥadith corpus the various "Sunnī" factions had not yet come to fully accept one another as valid representations of the Prophet's *sunna*. Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933) uses the term *Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamāʿa* (The Party of Sunna and Majority) to indicate the beliefs of the school of Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767), however, the theological school of Abū Ḥanīfa was by no means accepted by other "Sunnī" schools. The Ashʿarī School of theology traces its core teachings back to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/935–936).

[108] This is a pejorative term Sunnīs use for Shīʿīs, referring to their refusing to acknowledge the first three Caliphs of Islam.

[109] The earliest Ismāʿīlī mission in Iraq is dated to between 875 and 878 C.E. at Salamya. It was from this small town on the western edge of the Syrian steppe (*bādiya*), thirty kilometers southeast of the present day Syrian city of Ḥamā. From this city the Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* (proselytization) spread to Yemen and North Africa, eventually leading to

Shīʿīs who were contesting Abbasid religious authority, but there were also elements among the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* who were doing so as well. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī participated in this discourse on power and religious authority and spoke directly to the Shīʿī challenge. Al-Tirmidhī is credited with a short treatise titled, *al-Radd ʿalā al-Rāfiḍa* (*The Refutation of the Shīʿīs*) in which he responds to the claim of the Shīʿīs that the *khilāfa* (caliphate) of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib was obligatory upon all Muslims to follow just as prayer and *zakāt* were obligatory. Interestingly this treatise does not address the idea of *naṣṣ* (designation) of a Shīʿī Imām or the claims of various groups of Shīʿīs about the validity or supremacy of their Imām, which indicates the still nascent level of Shīʿī doctrine even at the end of the 9th-century C.E.[110] Al-Tirmidhī speaks directly to Shīʿī claims throughout his works and focuses on the legitimacy and authority of *ahl al-bayt*, as specifically referring to the Alid line. Al-Tirmidhī explains the Qur'anic verse cited by Shīʿīs to support their position that the *ahl al-bayt* are *maʿṣūm* (divinely protected from sin), by saying that the *ahl al-bayt* cannot be infallible because this infallibility applies only to prophets. His position is not antagonistic to the *ahl al-bayt* because he goes on to clarify that those among them who are *ʿulamāʾ* and *fuqahāʾ* (legal scholars) are to be followed.[111] Al-Tirmidhī's argument

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the establishment of the Fatimid Caliphate based in Egypt. Heinz Halm. *The empire of the Mahdi: the rise of the Fatimids*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1996, pp. 11–14. It is not clear why this movement began when it did. Over half a century separates the death of Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl and the leader of the Ismāʿīlī *daʿwa* that begins with ʿAbd Allāh the Elder in Salamya. ʿAbdallāh the Elder sets himself up as the representative of the Imam in hiding and his forebears spread the message of his awaited coming and the true religion (*dīn al-ḥaqq*) that represents their esoteric doctrine. We find a similar pattern here with Twelver (Imāmī) Shīʿism, in which, individuals claim to represent an awaited redeemer (*al-qāʾim bi al-ḥujja*) from the Alid line. We have to remember that the Abbasids also claimed their religious authority based on their coming from the prophetic household (*ahl al-bayt*). There was really only one option for those who wanted to espouse an alternative to Abbasid authority and that was to champion the Alid line. Alid pretensions to power and authority had existed since the very beginnings of the Abbasid revolution (750 CE), however, the Alid imāms had usually kept a low profile and had abstained from challenging the Abbasids. For some reason, during the latter part of the 9th-century C.E. several groups in the Abbasid realm began contesting Abbasid religious and political authority on behalf of Alid Imāms who either had disappeared or were killed by the Abbasids.

[110] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī. "Al-Radd ʿalā al-Rāfiḍa." Ed. A.S. Furat, in *Sharkiyat Mecmuasi* 6, 1996, pp. 37–46.

[111] Al-Tirmidhī clearly demonstrates here that he sees the *ʿulamāʾ* as custodians of religious authority. He says in the same discussion about the place of *ahl al-bayt* in *NU*: *wa idhā kāna hādhā al-ʿilm wa-al-fiqh mawjūdᵃⁿ fī ghayri ʿunṣurihim lazimanā al-iqtidāʾ bihim*, "…and if this knowledge and legal understanding had been present in other than them (the *ahl al-bayt*) it would be incumbent upon us to follow them." Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 101.

appeals to reason. He argues that the Prophet's order to follow the *ahl al-bayt* cannot be a general pronouncement because some of them have been shown to be of disrepute.[112] Al-Tirmidhī even seeks to redefine the word '*bayt*' in the phrase *ahl al-bayt* by using an etymological argument. He says that *ahl al-bayt* really means the *ṣiddīqūn* (the truthful ones) and the *abdāl* (substitutes).[113] He argues that the word '*bayt*' comes from the *maṣdar* of the tri-literal root *b-w-ʾ* in Arabic, which is *tabwiʾa* meaning 'to settle.'[114] The argument is that the Prophet came to this earth in order that the *dhikr* (remembrance of God) should 'settle' in the land and that any of those who migrated to this *dhikr* were called *ahl al-bayt* (the people of this settlement).[115] Al-Tirmidhī not only criticizes the Alid line but also directs his criticism toward the Abbasid claim to the term *ahl al-bayt.*[116] This is further justification that there were those among the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* who felt that the Abbasids had forfeited their religious authority. Al-Tirmidhī criticizes the Shīʿīs for fabricating Ḥadīth about the family of the Prophet, specifically the cousin of the Prophet, ʿAlī (d. 40/661), the daughter of the Prophet, Fāṭima (d. 11/632) and their two sons, Ḥasan (d. 50/670) and Ḥusayn (d. 61/680). He claims that they

[112] Ibid, p. 69.
[113] These 'substitutes' in al-Tirmidhī's hierarchy of saints are the forty individuals chosen by God who are each replaced by another saint if any one of their number dies. These forty individuals protect the earth through their special connection to God. This idea of the *abdāl* or 'substitutes' is much more basic than the later more sophisticated hierarchy of saints that we find in ʿAlī al-Hujwīrī's (d. 469/1077) work *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* in which he describes one *qutb* (pole), three *nuqabāʾ* (leaders), four *awtād* (pillars), seven *abrār* (pious ones), forty *abdāl* (substitutes) and three hundred *akhyār* (chosen ones). In this later more complex hierarchy there is a clear ordering of prominence in the spiritual kingdom with multiple levels, which we find absent in al-Tirimidhī's schema.
[114] Ibid, p. 263.
[115] This argument is problematic for several reasons. The first is that the root of the word *bayt* is considered by most grammarians to be from the root *b-y-t* meaning "to spend the night". Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311) in his *Lisān al-ʿArab*, one of the most comprehensive dictionaries of the Arabic language, records the root of *bayt* as *b-y-t*. Abū-Faḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn-Mukarram Ibn-Manẓūr. *Lisān al-ʿarab al-mujallad 2*. Bairūt: Dār aṣ-Ṣādir. 1994, Vol. 2, p. 14. The second problem with this argument is that it assumes that the meaning of 'settling' applies to the *dhikr*. This is an arbitrary relationship. Al-Tirmdhī relies here on the assumption that such relationships constitute *ḥikma*, which is a divinely gifted knowledge. Since this knowledge is inaccessible to others it can only be accepted based on al-Tirmidhī's own claims to have access to divine knowledge.
[116] The Abbasids claimed that *ahl al-bayt* included not only the Prophet's immediate household but also the larger paternal family with anyone from the clan of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (the grandfather of the Prophet) and Banū Hāshim (the descendants of the Prophet's great grandfather) coming under this designation. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 140.

fabricated Ḥadīth in order to elevate their status and he claims that these Ḥadīth are denied by those who have correct judgment (*al-muḥiqqūn*).[117] Al-Tirmdhī's attempts to refute Shīʿī claims are numerous throughout his works and he addresses various aspects of their beliefs.[118] It makes sense that al-Tirmidhī would directly confront Shīʿī claims to authority because the Shīʿīs represented the only viable alternative to the Abbasids and the *ʿulamāʾ* in terms of expressing and exercising religious authority (*wilāya dīniyya*). If al-Tirmidhī was going to advance a Sunnī doctrine of *wilāya*/*walāya* as he did, he would clearly have had to respond to the Shīʿīs. As we will see later, sainthood was a relatively undeveloped concept in Sunnī Islam outside of Shīʿī circles. Sainthood (*walāya*), supported by a gnoseology that was based on the rather underdeveloped concept of *ḥikma* (wisdom) among Muslim religious scholars during the 3rd/9th-century, resulted in creating a new field of opportunity for expressing claims to religious authority that could compete with the Shīʿī challenge.

Clientage (*walāʾ*) as a Social basis for Understanding Sunnī Authority.

We have discussed how the Muslim world experienced a contest between several groups for political and religious authority from the latter part of the 9th-century C.E. to the end of the 10th-century C.E. The Shīʿīs presented a potent challenge to the Abbasid caliphs as well as the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* who had codified legal methodologies in the form of nascent schools (*madhāhib*) and had come to generally accept a canon of Ḥadīth as representative of the words and actions of the Prophet.[119] The Abbasid Caliphs were losing their grip on power even though

[117] Ibid, pp. 64–65.
[118] ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ A. Baraka. *Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī wa-nadhariyyatuhu fī al-wilāya*. Vol. 1. Majmaʿ al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyya. Cairo. 1971, p. 170.
[119] We are still talking about a formative period in the development of Sunnī legal schools. It is not until the middle of the 4th/10th-century that Islamic legal schools come to contain all of the elements that give it an identifiable shape. However, by the middle of the 9th-century the major collections of Sunnī Ḥadīth were produced and the elements of

they still held immense charismatic authority. At the turn of the 4th/10th-century the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād began a movement among the *ʿulamāʾ* that successfully brought together adherents of various competing schools of thought into one movement among this proto-Sunnī urban scholarly community; however, this movement did not claim religious authority although it did claim Ṣūfī superiority over the scholars of outward knowledge (*ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir*).[120] It is on the eastern edge of the Islamic world at this same time that al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was contemplating and creating a vision of Sunnī religious authority that went far beyond the claims of other Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* of his time. His vision grounded religious authority in an elect group of the *ʿulamāʾ* whom he called the *awliyāʾ Allāh* (saints of God). In Chapter 4 we will be discussing al-Tirmidhī's theory of *walāya* in further detail in terms of its internal consistency. Here we will look at how the social and political milieu of Khurāsān and Transoxiana clearly played a role in forming al-Tirmidhī's concept of sainthood and possibly his motivations for using it as a model to advance the claims to authority of the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*. The proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* represent a large discourse stream in the 3rd/9th-century.[121] This discourse stream is generally understood separately from the social institutions of Arab privilege that are assumed to have lost their efficacy after the Abbasid Revolution (132/750). While this is generally true, we will see how this was not the case in Khurāsān.

As mentioned earlier, al-Tirmdhī lived for much of his early life under Ṭāhirid rule in Transoxania in the city of Tirmidh. The Ṭāhirids were Abbasid *mawālī*, that is, they were clients

a Sunnī 'approach' was evident even if the various elements had not yet been worked into a full system. Hallaq, Wael B. *The origins and evolution of Islamic law*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 2005, pp. 2–3.

[120] Green, Nile. *Sufism: a global history*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. 2012, p. 42.

[121] Muḥammad Qāsim Zamān's work supports the thesis that a proto-Sunnī scholarly elite existed in the 2nd and 3rd Islamic centuries. Muḥammad Qāsim Zamān. *Religion and politics under the early ʿAbbāsids: the emergence of the proto-Sunnī elite*. Leiden: Brill. 1997. Christopher Melchert counters this thesis, however, my research on al-Tirmidhī supports Zamān's claims and I therefore consider his findings to be generally sound.

of the Abbasid house.[122] Clientage (*walāʾ*) was a contractual bond of obligation between a free Arab Muslim and, often times, a manumitted slave. This social institution has its roots in Arab tribal society and was a means of integrating Arabs from one tribe into another. This allowed *mawālī* (pl. of *mawlā*) to obtain access to tribal privilege and protection. The system of *walāʾ* characterized Arab and non-Arab relationships during much of the Umayyad period (41–132/661–750). During the Abbasid period the institution no longer served to functionally organize relationships of inequality between Arab Muslims and non-Arab converts to Islam; however, the institution was still perpetuated by the ruling Abbasid house, especially in its army and with the governors of its provinces.[123] In particular, the province of greater Khurāsān (including Transoxania) was the most important province to the Abbasid Caliphs and represented its largest source of revenue. The Abbasid Caliphs preferred their *mawālī* as governors because they felt that the bond of loyalty among these clients was stronger than Arab or free Muslim subjects.[124] The word for governor in Arabic is *wālī* and his governing function is called *wilāya*. All of these words, *mawlā*/ *mawālī*, *wālī* and *wilāya* come from the same Arabic root *w-l-y*, meaning 'to be close to power, authority' or 'to hold power, govern, be in charge of some office.'[125] Similarly, the word for 'saint' (*walī*) and for 'sainthood' (*walāya*) derive from this same root and share in the constellation of meanings found in this root. In Chapter 4 we will address in more detail the use of the English word 'saint' for *walī* and its appropriateness within the scheme of al-Tirmidhī's concept of *walāya*. It is significant that throughout the Umayyad

[122] Bosworth, Clifford Edmund. "Ṭāhirids." EI2. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 08 December 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/t-a-hirids-COM_1152>
[123] Crone, Patricia. "Mawlā." *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 08 December 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/mawla-COM_0714>
[124] Ibid, *EI2*.
[125] Ibid, *EI2*.

period and into the Abbasid period, words formed from the Arabic root *w-l-y* are used to describe relations of power and dependence, specifically between Arabs and non-Arabs. These particular relations of dependence frame al-Tirmidhī's position as one of the *ʿulamāʾ* who is a descendant of the early Arab settlers/conquerors of the region. As a free Muslim of Arab descent, al-Tirmidhī had a higher social status, technically speaking, than the Ṭāhirid rulers of greater Khurāsān who were *mawālī* ruling on behalf of the Abbasids. Al-Tirmidhī must have felt the humiliation acutely when he was summoned by the *wālī* of Balkh at the behest of some of the scholars of his city to be publically admonished in front of the governor and ordered to cease his discourse on love.[126] In *NU* al-Tirmidhī devotes a section to the characteristics of 'just governors' (*wulāt al-umūr al-ʿādilīn*). Al-Tirmidhī only gives these rulers *sulṭān* (executive power) temporal power, which can be revoked by God if they are not just (*ʿādilīn*) to their subjects. For al-Tirmidhī these temporal rulers are not *khulafāʾ* (successors, caliphs) of the Prophet like the *awliyāʾ* (saints) and thus have no religious authority in his eyes. Al-Tirmidhī includes not only the governors of his region in this category, but also the Abbasid 'caliphs' in Baghdād, as mentioned earlier.[127] This was a transformative period for al-Tirmidhī and it is evident that he had begun to reassess the relationships of social dependence that had developed over time as well as the impact they had on legal and spiritual matters. The choice of al-

[126] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 20–21. Al-Tirmidhī considered this trial at Balkh a means of God purifying his heart and he draws a parallel between himself facing persecution at the hands of his detractors and the Prophet David facing persecutions because of his mistakes. He describes this parallel in the passage directly following his description of the trial at Balkh. In this ordeal, al-Tirmidhī is maligned by the scholars of outward religious knowledge (*ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir*) whom he sees as inferior because they don't have inward knowledge (*al-ʿilm al-bāṭin*). Furthermore, he is ordered not to teach about love of God by the non-Arab governor who is a *mawlā*. The parallel between himself and the Prophet David is important because in *NU* we find that David was humiliated by his son who sought to take his throne from him. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, pp. 45–92.

[127] This is an early articulation by al-Tirmidhī of the division between political authority (*sulṭān*) and religious authority (*khilāfa*). Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī about two hundred years later articulates a similar division between *wilāya* (authority of the caliph) and *shawka* (force). Al-Ghazālī is describing the phenomenon in which the Seljuq *mawālī* came to control the Caliph and according to him *wilāya* follows *shawka*. Omid Safi. *The politics of knowledge in premodern Islam negotiating ideology and religious inquiry*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2006, p. 114.

Tirmidhī's language is highly significant because his concept of sainthood (*walāya*) may be understood as patterned off of the social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*) that mediated relationships between the *khalīfa* (successor to the Prophet in the form of the Abbasid Caliph) and his *mawālī* upon whom he bestowed his *wilāya* (authority) to carry out his orders as his governors (*wulāt*). Al-Tirmidhī restructures the basic elements of clientage (*walāʾ*) such that the *awliyāʾ* (saints) are now the *khulafāʾ* (pl. *khalīfa*, successors of the Prophet) and are the truly 'free' ones (*aḥrār*).[128] The term *awliyāʾ* was also used as a synonym for *mawālī* in al-Tirmidhī's time.[129] Hence, for al-Tirmidhī, just as the Caliph frees the slave and then enters into a bond of allegiance known as *walāʾ* (clientage), it is God who frees the believing servant from the bondage of his lower self to make him his *walī*. In this scheme it is now God's *awliyāʾ* (saints) who govern the world in a spiritual sense. As *khulafāʾ* (Caliphs) they are religious authorities just as the *mawālī* (also termed *awliyāʾ*) of the Caliph govern his subjects as *wulāt* (governors).

Al-Tirmidhī uses language that relates to the existing social institution of slavery to explain the process of becoming one of the *awliyāʾ*. This is ultimately a language describing the relationship of dependence between the owner and the owned. In al-Tirmidhī's most important book on the nature of *walāya* he answers a question from one of his students about what happens in the event that thoughts occur to the heart of the *walī* that contradict the Qurʾān. In his answer al-Tirmidhī draws a parallel to the Prophet himself and explains that God will protect such an

[128] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 150, vol. 3, p. 120.
[129] When the Abbasid Caliph became alarmed at al-Layth b. ʿAlī b. al-Layth's (d. 316/928) military activities in Fars and his threat to Khūzistān in 910 C.E., he had his vizier send 5,000 slave troops (*awliyāʾ* and *ghilmān*) under Muʾnis al-Khādim to recapture Fars. The *awliyāʾ* here represent freed slaves or *mawālī* and the *ghilmān* are Turkish slave soldiers who are still slaves and have not yet been freed. Bosworth, Clifford Edmund. *The history of the Saffarids of Sistan and the Maliks of Nimruz: (247/861 to 949/1542–1543)*. Costa Mesa, Calif: Mazda Publishers in association with Bibliotheca Persica. 1994, p. 261.

individual from error like the Prophet was protected from the Satanic verses.[130] This protection is not given to one who has not become completely free of his lower self and who is still a slave to his desires. The following quote from al-Tirmidhī's *SA* is provided *in extenso* because of its importance in explaining the master-slave dynamic that underlies al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood:

> *Qāla lahu al-qāʾil: fa-in warada ʿalā qalbihi shayʾun lā yuwāfiq al-kitāb? Qāla: inna walāyata Allāhi lahu tughīthuhu kamā aghātha Allahu al-rasūla ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam fī risālatihi ḥattā yunsakhu ʿan qalbihi waḥyu al-shayṭān, wa-muḥālun an yakūna qalbun mawṣufun bi-hādhā bi-an yutrak makhdhūlan, wa law jāza hādhā an yadūm idhan la-baṭalat al-walāya, wa-innamā yajūzu hādhā al-takhlīṭ wa-dawāmu mithla hādhihi al-ashyāʾ li mithli hāʾulāʾ al-murīdīn al-ladhīna hum fī hādhā al-ṭarīq, wa-man waṣala ilā al-martaba wa-nafsuhu maʿahu mashḥuna bi-tilk al-makāmin bi-dahāʾi al-nafs fa-ulzima al-martaba ʿalā sharīṭa al-luzūm li-uhadhdhab, fa-huwa ka-l-mukātab al-ladhī yuʿṭaq ʿalā al-māl, fa-huwa ʿabdun mā baqiya ʿalayhi dirham, fa-ammā man uʿṭaqa jūdan wa raḥmatan ʿalayhi qad ṣāra ḥurran lā tabiʿatun ʿalayhi li-man kāna yamlikuhu. Fa-kadhālika hādhā uʿṭiqa ʿalā sharīṭati luzūm al-martaba huwa ka-al-mukātab, fa huwa ʿabdun mā baqiya ʿalayhi khuluqun min akhlāq al-nafs, wa al-majdhūb aʿṭaqahu Allahu min riqqi al-nafs ḥīna jadhabahu fa-qad ṣāra ḥurran, wa alzama al-martaba ḥīna hudhdhiba wa uddiba wa ṭuhhira, fa-aʿṭaqahu Allāhu min riqqi al-nafs bi-jūdihi bi-lā tabiʿa, lam yabqā li-l-nafs fīhi muṭālaba khuluqun min akhlāqihā, fa huwa ayḍan majdhūb min al-martaba, wa qad bayyana Allāhu dhālika fī tanzīlihi fa-qāla: Allāhu yajtabī ilayhi man yashāʾ wa-yahdī ilayhi man yunīb, fa-l-mujtabā man jabāhu Allahu fa-jadhabahu, fa-huwa min ahl jibāyatihi min al-mashīʾa, wa al-ākharu min man hadāhu Allāhu al-wuṣūla ilayhi bi-l-ināba, fa-l-awwalu min ahl mashīʾatihi wa-l-thānī min ahl hidāyatihi, wa-lā takhlū al-dunyā min hādihi al-umma min qāʾim bi-ḥujja, kamā qāla ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu: Allāhumma lā takhlu al-arḍ min qāʾim bi-ḥujja kay lā tabṭula ḥujaj Allāh wa-bayyinātih, wa qāla fī tanzīlihi: qul hādhihi sabīlī adʿū ilā Allāh ʿalā baṣīratin anā wa-man ittabaʿanī, wa-lam yajʿalhā illā li-tābiʿīhi, fa-tābaʿahu man*

[130] Al-Tirmidhī does not claim that the *awliyāʾ* are infallible (*maʿṣūm*) as the Shīʿīs do of their Imāms. Rather, he explains in *NU* that only prophets are infallible and that all other human beings are tested (*umtuḥinū - in the passive*) except that the *awliyāʾ* have been lifted out of these tests (*miḥan*).

tābaʿahu ʿalā jamīʿi mā jāʾa bihi min ʿind Allāh qalb^{an} *wa qawl*^{an} *wa-fiʿlan.*[131]

The student asked him: "But what if something arrives in his heart which doesn't agree with the Book?" He replied: Indeed he possesses Friendship with God which will assist him the way God assisted the Messenger with regard to his mission, namely God expunged from his heart Satan's revelations. It is impossible that a heart endowed with these qualities be abandoned and forsaken by God. If such a state were allowed to continue, then [the person's] Friendship (*walāya*) with God would be abolished. Indeed, such a state of adulteration and the persistence of such things are only possible in the case of those who are still striving on this path. The person who has reached the rank [of divine closeness] but whose carnal soul, in its secret corners, is still filled with the carnal soul's cunning wiles is unconditionally obliged to remain in his rank in order to become refined. Thus he is like a self-ransomed slave who is freed for money. He is a slave as long as one *dirham* is still owed. On the other hand, the slave who was set free out of generosity (*jūd*) and mercy (*raḥma*), becomes a free man (*ḥurr*) without the one who formerly possessed him retaining any claim on him. And so is the manner of the man striving to reach God is set free on the condition that he remain in his rank, like a self-ransomed slave. Indeed, he is a slave as long as one moral trait from among the moral traits of the carnal soul remains with him. Only the man drawn unto God is set free immediately by God from slavery to the carnal soul when God draws him unto Himself. And thus he becomes a free man. The other one adheres to his rank while he is being refined, educated and cleansed, and then God, in His generosity, sets him free from slavery to the carnal soul without responsibility. The carnal soul can no longer demand from him any one of its moral traits. Then he also becomes drawn from his rank [unto divine closeness]. God has made this clear in His revelation where He says [42/13]: "God chooses for it [the faith] whom He will, and He guides to it those that repent." The chosen person is the one God appropriates and then draws unto Himself. And this person belongs to the people whom God has appropriated (*ahl jibāyatihi*) because He so wills. The other person is one of those to whom God gives guidance, and they reach Him through repentance. The first is one of the people of God's act of willing (*ahl mashīʾatihi*), and the second is one of the people of His guidance (*ahl hidāyatihi*). Nor is the world of this religious community ever devoid of someone who presents proof [against

[131] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Drei Schriften des Theosophen von Tirmiḏ: Das Buch vom Leben der Gottesfreunde; Ein Antwortschreiben nach Saraḫs; Ein Antwortschreiben nach Rayy*. Ed. Bernd Radtke. Beirut: Orient-Institut der DMG. 1992, pp. 55–57.

> them] (*qāʾim bi-l-ḥujja*), as accords with what ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib said, "Oh Lord God, may the earth not be without someone who presents proof [against mankind] so that God's proofs and clear evidence are not nullified." And God in His revelation has declared [to Muhammad] [12/108]: "Say: 'This is my path. I call [you] unto God with discernment (*baṣīra*), I and all my followers.'" And God only bestows this discernment upon those who follow Muḥammad, and his followers are those who follow him with regard to everything he brought from God – in their hearts, in their words and in their actions.[132]

This selection from al-Tirmidhī's *SA* distinguishes between two types of *walī* (saint). The first is the one who aspires to be a *walī* and is on the path of disciplining his lower self (*nafs*), but has not yet succeeded completely. This person is like the slave who is paying off his debt to his master. He has entered into an agreement with his master to pay off a set sum of money through his labor. He is called the *mukātab* and even after he pays off this amount he still retains a debt of allegiance and service to his master. Once the *mukātab* is freed he becomes a *mawlā* (pl. *mawālī*) and remains connected to his master through ties of loyalty. This type of *walī* must remain in his rank and is not completely free because the fact that he freed himself always compromises the nature of his *walāya* (sainthood). The second type of *walī* in al-Tirmdhī's schema is the *walī* who is freed from the slavery to his lower self by God's pure favor (*jūd*) and mercy (*raḥma*). This is the *walī* who becomes completely free (*ḥurr*, pl. *aḥrār*) and is the true saint. Both of these types of saints (*awliyāʾ*) are distinguished from the general populace who are all slaves (*ʿabīd*) to their lower desires whether they are aware or not. As we will discuss later in Chapter 5, according to al-Tirmdhī, traveling the path of *walāya* is a condition but not a guarantee that one will attain the highest levels of sainthood. The parallels in this concept of sainthood to the social bond of *walāʾ* (clientage) and the social institution of slavery are quite

[132] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 123–124.

striking. The true *awliyāʾ* can be seen as parallel to the free Arabs who were given a position of power and authority by historical circumstance (of course, in al-Tirmidhī's understanding it was a divine gift). They came to rule over large numbers of non-Arabs who were also non-Muslim and the only way to rise in the new Arab polity during the Umayyad era was through clientage (*walāʾ*).[133] These were free (*aḥrār*) Arabs who, like the true saints (*awliyāʾ*), did not earn their privilege but received it as a pure gift. The clients (*mawālī*) in this system could never become Arab but could rise socially by entering into a pact of clientage (*walāʾ*) with an Arab tribe or influential family. Theoretically speaking, this pact would extend in perpetuity to their offspring. The same is true for the *walī* who is *mukātab*. He never becomes a true *walī* such as the *aḥrār*, but once he is freed from his lower self he must remain in his rank even after having freed himself. On the other hand, al-Tirmidhī explains that the one who is freed out of God's mercy is freed "without the one who formerly possessed him retaining any claim on him." This 'claim' (*tibāʿa*) is another term for *walāʾ* and al-Tirmidhī uses this to mean that there is no bond of clientage, *lā tabiʿata ʿalayhi*, for the truly free *walī*.[134]

The social bond of clientage, which characterized the relationship of Arabs and non-Arabs since the beginnings of Muslim rule in Khurāsān and Transoxiana, provides a framework for articulating al-Tirmidhī's positioning of the saint (*walī*) as the rightful heir to the Prophet's religious and charismatic authority. Al-Tirmidhī uses this language of clientage and social dependence to describe the true saint, thereby translating the power differential inherent in this social institution into a plane of virtual relationships between saints (*awliyāʾ*) and those who are

[133] A non-Arab convert could enter into a client-patron relationship from manumission or through voluntary commendation, this latter path being known by the terms *tibāʿa*, *luzūm*, *inqitāʿ*, *khidma* and more generally *muwālāt*. However, the vast majority of *mawālī* during Umayyad times came into this relationship through manumission as slaves. Crone, Patricia. *Slaves on horses: the evolution of the Islamic polity*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. 1980, pp. 49–50.
[134] Ibid, p. 49.

not saints or have not attained sainthood. The question here is: Why would al-Tirmidhī do this? Who benefits from this realignment of social dependence in the virtual sphere? To answer this we have to come back to al-Tirmidhī's identity as a member of the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*) and as a Muslim of Arab descent in a largely non-Arab, and to some degree non-Muslim, context.

Al-Tirmidhī conceives of the *awliyāʾ* as originating from the social class of the *ʿulamāʾ*. At the same time he is very critical of the *ʿulamāʾ* and so it is not all *ʿulamāʾ* who are liable to be saints but rather selected ones who are able to penetrate beyond the outward form of religious knowledge to its hidden esoteric meanings. In *NU* al-Tirmidhī clearly places the *ʿulamāʾ* above the general populace (*ʿāmma*) and below the *anbiyāʾ* (prophets). That point of distinction between these groups is knowledge (*ʿilm*). According to al-Tirmdhī knowledge is like a sea (*baḥr*) that flows into a river valley (*wādī*) and from a river valley to a river (*nahr*) and from a river to a creek (*jadwal*) and from a creek to a rivulet (*saqiya*).[135] If the river valley were to flow directly into the creek it would overrun it (*gharaqahu*) and ruin it (*afsadahu*) and if the sea were to tilt (*māla*) into the river valley it would ruin it (*afsadahu*).[136] The general populace (*ʿāmma*) here refers to free men who, in turn, educate their wives, children and slaves with the knowledge they have taken from the *ʿulamāʾ*. Hence, al-Tirmidhī's larger spiritual hierarchy places the *ʿulamāʾ* as the authoritative representatives of the prophets above the general populace who are ignorant of the revelation. Al-Tirmidhī then provides three levels within the *ʿulamāʾ* class. These three are the *ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir* (scholars of outward learning, i.e., *fuqahāʾ*), the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) and the *awliyāʾ* (saints).[137] The *fuqahāʾ* are scholars of outward knowledge and al-Tirmidhī

[135] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 30-31.
[136] Ibid, vol. 2, p. 30-31.
[137] The *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars of outward knowledge) are those who answer questions about the *ḥalāl* (permissible) and the *ḥarām* (forbidden). The *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) drop words of knowledge about God's management (*tadbīr*) of the world and by sitting with them one benefits from their wisdom. The *kubarāʾ* (great ones – synonymous with *awliyāʾ* in al-Tirmidhī's terminology) speak about the knowledge of God's blessings (*ālāʾ*), and simply to behold them is a medicine, and their speech (*kalām*) is a healing. Ibid, p. 128.

likens their knowledge to a grammatical sentence. Outward knowledge (*ʿilm al-ẓāhir*) of Islam is the sentence itself and the inward knowledge (*ʿilm al-bāṭin*) or gnosis (*maʿrifa*) is the comprehension (*tamyīz*) of that sentence. Outward knowledge, according to al-Tirmidhī, is also known as the knowledge of the tongue (*ʿilm al-lisān*) and is God's proof against humanity.[138] Al-Tirmidhī sees the Islamic sciences (Fiqh, Kalām, Ḥadīth, Tafsīr, Qawāʿid al-Naḥwu) as the basis and fundament for esoteric interpretation *ab intra* as understood by the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages). The *awliyāʾ* (saints) go beyond the esoteric interpretation of texts and engage in direct speech with God (*muḥādatha*) and receive direct knowledge from him.[139] While al-Tirmidhī is highly critical of the *ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir,* he is critical of them only because they stop at the outward significance of their knowledge and do not go beyond it.[140] This amounts to ruining (*ifsād*) the knowledge that they are supposed to represent. What al-Tirmidhī is attempting to do is to reform the social class to which he belongs. He is not only seeking reform but at the same time affirming the importance of this social class as the true religious authorities and successors (*khulafāʾ*) of the Prophet. As mentioned before with regard to the Shīʿī *imāms*, religious authority that claims direct contact with God is more powerful than a claim to mere interpretation of religious texts. The fact that al-Tirmidhī does not designate specific markers for identifying the *awliyāʾ* serves to sanctify the entire class of *ʿulamāʾ*. So, while we know that the *awliyāʾ* will originate from their ranks, we do not have markers to indicate who they are according to al-Tirmidhī's doctrine.[141]

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[138] Al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm. *ʿIlm al-awliyāʾ* [Cairo]: Maktabat al-Ḥurrīya al-Ḥadīthah. 1983, pp. 160–161.

[139] The saints (*awliyāʾ*) are no longer in need of texts for their knowledge. Al-Tirmidhī implies this in *NU* when he says, *wa ammā al-ʿāmma fa innahum yaḥtājūn ilā al-nuṣūṣ wa al-āthār ʿalā alsinat ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir*, "…and as for the general populace, they need texts and traditions upon the tongues of the outward scholars." Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 43.

[140] Ibid, vol. 4, pp. 72–73.

[141] Al-Tirmidhī does claim that there are ways to uncover who the *awliyāʾ Allāh* are but ultimately these are subjective despite the fact that he claims they are *ẓāhira* (outward). For example, he says that one can know the existence of sainthood (*walāya*) in an individual by looking into the face of such a person and if one sees the light of

We have discussed how al-Tirmidhī uses the language of clientage that, in his time, served to mediate relationships between free men and slaves, Arabs and non-Arabs, and caliph and subject, as a template for projecting the self-imposed (internalized) notions of obligation, loyalty, and commitment into a virtual realm. The social institution of *walāʾ* (clientage) was disappearing during al-Tirmidhī's lifetime. The Abbasid revolution (750 C.E.) uprooted and replaced the old system of *walāʾ* for a more equitable relationship that used Islam as a common denominator between both Arab and non-Arab subjects. The old system did not disappear overnight though, and *walāʾ* continued on, especially in the caliph's army and administration and in the all-important province of greater Khurāsān. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* freezes the social relationships of power in his time and incorporates them into a virtual space. We say virtual here because real power had already been transferred to the non-Arabs who were ruling greater Khurāsān with practical autonomy in the name of the Caliph. The reality of this shift in real power became openly clear in the Ṣaffārid rebellion, in which greater Khurāsān was ruled for a short period of time in the second half of the 9th-century C.E. by Yaʿqūb al-Ṣaffār (d. 265/879), a Persian of humble origins who had dismissed the authority of the 'caliphal fiction.' This fiction operated through a façade of local rulers paying tribute to the Abbasid caliph, while in reality they were not actually under the command of Baghdād.[142] The occurrence of this rebellion is one of the few historical events that al-Tirmidhī records in his writings. So, while the social institution of *walāʾ* was disappearing in his time, al-Tirmidhī was calling for the preservation of social dependence as it was represented in that institution through his doctrine of

God's majesty and feels the awe of God's greatness one knows that such a person is one of God's *awliyāʾ*. Ibid, p. 140.

[142] Bosworth, C.E. "Yaʿḳūb b. al-Layth." *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 13 December 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ya-k-u-b-b-al-layt-h-SIM_7966>

walāya. He envisioned the *ʿulamāʾ* as those who would become the guardians of religious authority with certain individuals among them who could become the saints (*awliyāʾ*) who would receive direct knowledge from God (*maʿrifa*). Even though local Persians had taken effective control of their political destinies in greater Khurāsān, according to al-Tirmidhī's framework of *walāya*, they were still slaves (*ʿabīd*) and clients (*mawālī*) in a system that required them to follow the *ʿulamāʾ* for their ultimate salvation. The *ʿulamāʾ* were not only custodians of Islamic traditions and lore, but the elect (*khāṣṣa*) among them, according to al-Tirmidhī, were in direct contact with God.[143] In an important passage in al-Tirmidhī's *IA* he describes the *awliyāʾ* as the *khulafāʾ* of the Messenger who must be obeyed by the *ʿāmma* (general populace):

> *Fa-lammā rafaʿhu Allāhu taʿālā ilayhi jaʿala lahu fī ummatihi khulafāʾ karāmat*[an] *lahu fa-fāraqahum ẓill al-hawā wa aʿtaqa nufūsahum min khayāliha fa kamā jaʿala ṭāʿata hāʾulāʾ al-khulafāʾ wājibat*[an] *ʿalā al-umma fadīlat*[an] *lahum ʿalā ghayrihim min al-awliyāʾ wa hum khawāṣṣ al-awliyāʾ wa rijāl Allāh fī arḍihi alladhīna yaghbiṭuhum al-nabiyyūn wa-al-shuhadāʾ yawm al-qiyāma li-makānihim wa qurbihim min Allāh ʿazza wa jalla wa-taʿālā.*[144]
>
> So, when Allāh most high took him (the Prophet) up to himself, he made successors to him from among his community. He (God) removed from them the shadow of vain desire and he (God) freed their souls from its fantasies. And so, in the same way he made obedience to those successors (*khulafāʾ*) obligatory upon the Muslim community as a special privilege for them over and above others of the saints (*awliyāʾ*). They are the elite of the saints (*awliyāʾ*) and God's men in his earth; those who the prophets and the martyrs will envy on the Day of Judgment because of their rank and their nearness to Allāh, glorified and majestic and most high.

The conflation of the term *khulafāʾ* (successors) with *awliyāʾ* (saints) unambiguously assigns religious authority to the *awliyāʾ* (saints). While the religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) often claimed to

[143] Ethnicity was not the most important factor in identity formation in this period as has been discussed around the topic of the Shuʿūbiyya controversy. Ibid. *Al-Shuʿūbiyya*, *EI2*.
[144] Ibid. *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ*, p. 140.

be *warathat al-anbiyāʾ* (heirs of the prophet), they almost never claimed to be *khulafāʾ* (caliphs).[145] Similarly, the majority of Shīʿīs adopted the term Imām to indicate their religious and spiritual authority figure. The term *khalīfa* (successor or caliph) was the prerogative of the Abbasids and the Umayyads before them. Claiming *khilāfa* could be seen as a direct challenge to Abbasid claims to political and religious authority over the *umma* (community of Muslims).[146] Al-Tirmidhī's language is brazen in both its dismissal of the Abbasids as religious authorities and in its direct rebuttal of Shīʿī claims. Identifying al-Tirmidhī as belonging to the discourse stream of the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* is important to understanding why al-Tirmidhī proffers a doctrine of sainthood when he does. The social and political context of this discourse stream should then play an important role in defining the way al-Tirmidhī structures his doctrine of *walāya*. We find this to be true, since it is the social institution of clientage that provides an underlying framework by which al-Tirmidhī situates his *awliyāʾ* with respect to other elements in his society.

Conclusion

The latter part of the 9th-century C.E. and much of the 10th-century C.E. saw an intense debate within the lands of the Muslim caliphate over the nature of both political and religious authority. The Shīʿīs emerged as a major opposition to the Abbasids and were even successful in establishing a counter-caliphate. The Shīʿīs were not the only ones who were claiming *khilāfa*

[145] While the term Caliph (*khalīfa*) has a much broader signification than simply the temporal Caliphs of the Umayyads and Abbasids, al-Tirmidhī uses the term specifically to refer to religious authority that requires obedience to what he terms the real *khulafāʾ* (Caliphs) who are the *awliyāʾ* in his schematization of the term. It is significant that those groups who sought to claim religious authority did so by appropriating this specific term.

[146] Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds (1986) trace the use of the word *khalīfa* (successor, Caliph) from the Rāshidūn Caliphs up through the Abbasid era and conclude that this term was used by both Umayyad and Abbasid rulers to claim not just successorship (*khilāfa*) to the Prophet but also to mean the successor appointed by God. The Umayyads established a counter caliphate in Spain while the Fatimids established a caliphate in North Africa. Both of these movements represent direct challenges to Abbasid authority.

(successorship, caliphate) from the Abbasids. On the eastern edge of the Abbasid Empire al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī was working out another vision of *khilāfa* that would place the *awliyāʾ* (saints) in the position of *khulafāʾ* (successors) to prophetic authority and charisma. These *khulafāʾ*, for al-Tirmidhī, would ultimately came from the ranks of the proto-Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* would later be incorporated into the great mystical synthesis of the 10th-century C.E. in Nīshāpūr where the Sufism of Baghdād-inspiration took its mature form. In Chapter 4 we will show how al-Tirmidhī's concept of *walāya* became a part of this synthesis and came to signify one of the dominant modes of Sunnī religious authority up to the present.

Chapter 2

Wisdom Meditates the Terrestrial and Celestial:

Pythagorean Wisdom and the Non-duality of Sainthood

Ḥikma (wisdom) is not one of Franz Rosenthal's categories of knowledge; however, it is a central theme in al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and doctrine of sainthood. Al-Tirmidhī not only adopted established concepts of *ḥikma*, but reinvented its meaning to fit his own paradigm. This chapter will discuss conceptions of *ḥikma* in both Muslim and non-Muslim sources. Using al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* we will show how al-Tirmidhī takes his concept of *ḥikma* from the Neopythagorean Hellenistic tradition. For al-Tirmidhī, *ḥikma* is different than gnosis (*maʿrifa*) and *ḥikma*, as a knowledge of the world and its opposites, serves to frame his essentially non-dual metaphysic. *Ḥikma* provides a backdrop for al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood.

The Importance of *Ḥikma*

In this chapter we intend to show how al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's use of *ḥikma* is critical to understanding his doctrine of sainthood (*walāya*). As was previously discussed in the Introduction, al-Tirmidhī's mysticism can be considered a gnoseology or a mystical doctrine based on a special kind of knowledge and a special access to that knowledge. It is for this reason that a discussion of al-Tirmidhī's epistemology is critical to understanding his concept of *walāya* (sainthood). In other words, if the saint (*walī*) is one who is distinguished by a special kind of knowledge, then the definition and character of that knowledge will affect who we understand the saint to be. Franz Rosenthal appears to misinterpret al-Tirmidhī's concept of wisdom and incorrectly conflates *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *ʿilm* (knowledge), which is something al-Tirmidhī

would never have accepted given his rejection of the existence of synonyms. The fullest treatment of *ḥikma* in the Islamic tradition is provided by Dimitri Gutas who has furthered our understanding of *ḥikma* as a literary genre in both Arabic and non-Arabic sources. He does not, however, discuss *ḥikma* as a knowledge-type. Part of the difficulty in establishing a basis for an understanding of *ḥikma* (wisdom) during the 8th- and 9th-centuries C.E. in Iraq and Khurāsān is that no current study adequately addresses *ḥikma* as a knowledge-type. Most discussions concerning the topic tend to define *ḥikma* as it is represented in Greek philosophy in Aristotelian and Neoplatonic forms. This projects an Aristotelian and Neoplatonic view of *ḥikma*, as it was conceived in the 10th century C.E., anachronistically onto the 8th- and 9th-centuries C.E. when al-Tirmidhī was active. There were also many indigenous forms of *ḥikma* that took on their own significances within particular communities in the Near East since the Hellenistic period. Using Rosenthal's categories of knowledge we have a picture of al-Tirmidhī's basic episteme. *Ḥikma* is not one of Rosenthal's categories of Islamic knowledge-types. However, *ḥikma* certainly was an important category among eastern Christians and Jewish Rabbanites. Furthermore, *ḥikma* (wisdom) is mentioned in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature despite its secondary importance in relation to *ʿilm* (knowledge) in later Islamic scholarship. All of these factors provided an opportunity for al-Tirmidhī to focus on *ḥikma* (wisdom) as an alternative to *ʿilm* (knowledge).

It is in the 10th-century C.E. that we begin to see a shift in categories that eventually equates *ḥikma* (wisdom) with philosophy in its Neoplatonic and Aristotelian forms. It will be stressed that a discussion about *ḥikma* must necessarily include a discussion of the *ḥukamāʾ* (the sages or the purveyors of *ḥikma*) to the extent that we can identify the *ḥukamāʾ* as particular individuals, as in the case of al-Tirmidhī, or as those who represented an ideal-type who possessed a special vouchsafed knowledge from God such as al-Junayd. The extent to which

ḥikma (wisdom) is embodied as *ḥukamā'* (sages) will help us to understand the manner in which this type of knowledge was conceived and valued during this period. The question that concerns us here is the extent to which the concept of *ḥikma* during this period differs from how it was understood in the context of Hellenistic philosophy in its more mature form in the mid to latter part of the 10th-century C.E. *Ḥikma* came to signify a particular set of meanings for particular segments of the learned class during the 8th- and 9th-centuries C.E. before it subsequently took on a more specific technical usage with the full bloom of Falsafa. Hence, our project here is to survey the uses of *ḥikma* amongst these groups beginning with the Christian ascetic Isaac of Nineveh (d. 700 C.E.) and ending with al-Tirmidhī himself. What we propose here is that a variety of concepts of *ḥikma* existed side-by-side during this period until, eventually, a particularly 'philosophical' or Neoplatonic meaning of *ḥikma* became dominant by the middle of the 10th-century C.E. While al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* was definitely Hellenistic, it was not the philosophical form that became widespread in the 10th-century C.E.[147] Al-Tirmidhī not only borrowed a particular form of Hellenistic *ḥikma*, but he modified it to suit an Islamic context. We will demonstrate this new position with respect to al-Tirmidhī by introducing my findings from al-Tirmidhī's *KH*, which exists only in manuscript form in a single library in Bursa, Turkey. In the chapter that follows we will demonstrate how al-Tirmidhī uses this particular type of *ḥikma* to propose something quite novel in his approach to *walāya* (sainthood).

[147] In this respect we are countering Bernd Radtke's thesis that al-Tirmidhī's thought is only tangentially and superficially Hellenistic. That is, it was not learned but unconsciously appropriated. We do not go as far as Yves Marquet though in saying that it was purely Neoplatonic. A. M. Goichon concludes that the scientific aspect of hikma remains unbroken from the Greeks to the Arabs. We find this to be true with al-Tirmidhi in which a mystical/scientific view of hikma is used rather than a philosophical/scientific usage. Goichon, A.M. "Ḥikma" *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 07 April 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/hikma-SIM_2861>

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* in the Near East

The sage (*ḥakīm*, pl. *ḥukamāʾ*) is a motif that has persisted for millennia throughout the Near East whether it is in extra-biblical texts such as *The Words of Aḥiqār* or from the sages of the Biblical tradition (Esther and the Song of Songs) or even the New Testament.[148]
the sage motif takes on new and varied forms during Late Antiquity amongst the Rabbis (*hakhamīm* or wise ones) as well as Nestorian Christians who discussed the sage (*ḥkemā*) and his wisdom (*ḥkemūtā*). Geographically, the sage motif in the pre-Islamic period spans from Egypt to Persia[149] (Ancient Iran), India and China in the East, as well as from Greece (*Sophia*, i.e., the writings of the pre-Socratics, Plato and Aristotle) to Yemen[150] in the South.[151] Thus, when we find *ḥikma* and the motif of the *ḥakīm* prominent in the works of a 9th-century C.E. Muslim mystic from Transoxania, al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, we should not be surprised. This diffuse use of the term over such large temporal and geographical areas makes it difficult to make generalizations about the meaning of *ḥikma* (wisdom) without looking at particular contexts.

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* in Jewish and Christian Thought (7th- and 10th-centuries C.E.)

We will now look at how various Christian and Jewish writers living in Muslim lands used *ḥikma* and the sage motif to indicate a special type of knowledge as well as the knowledgeable individual. A Nestorian mystic and ascetic by the name of Isaac of Nineveh wrote a series of ascetical homilies that have become classics in both the Catholic and Eastern

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[148] J. G. Gammie et al. *The Sage in Israel and the ancient Near East.* Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns. 1990, p. xi
[149] Ibid, pp. 144–146
[150] Dimitri Gutas. "Classical Arabic Wisdom Literature: Nature and Scope." *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 101, No. 1, Oriental Wisdom (Jan. - Mar., 1981), p. 78. There is no consensus on the origin of Luqman whose name is associated with maxims (*ḥikma*) in pre-Islamic Arabia. The Islamic tradition and most early Arabic sources associate Luqmān with South Arabia and the tribe of ʿĀd in particular.
[151] *Ḥikma* can be distinguished from Greek *paideia*. *Paideia* transfers over in Arabic to the word *adab* (arts) and *taʾdīb* (education in the arts). Ibid. *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 284.

Orthodox traditions. Isaac was consecrated bishop of the Nestorian Church by the Patriarch George (660–680 C.E.) after having been a monk at the monastery of Bethabe in Kurdistān. However, after only five months in the bishopric he abdicated and moved to the monastery of Bar Shapur where he died in the mountains of Kuzistan in western Iran.[152] Isaac of Nineveh is significant to our discussion of al-Tirmidhī because his writings demonstrate how developed the motif of the *ḥakīm* had become in the Syriac Christian literature of the early Islamic period. Isaac of Ninevah lived during the Muslim/Arab conquests of the 1st Islamic century (7th-century C.E.). During this period Muslims were mostly segregated in garrison towns in Kufa and Basra in Iraq so it is almost certain that they had no impact on Isaac's thought. We can therefore assume that Isaac is providing us with an insight into *ḥikma* as it was understood just prior to the Muslim/Arab conquests.

Isaac of Nineveh refers to the *ḥukamāʾ* both as those who had attained religious authority as well as a motif or prototype of the ideal ascetic. In a fascinating set of passages in the *Homilies* Isaac refers to the pagan philosophers (ܗܠܣܗܕ) as "external" sages (ܣܒܝܟ). He provides a story of one philosopher who attempts to control his will at all cost lest his 'wisdom' be sullied, even if it should mean death at the hands of the 'Greek king' Alexander.[153] Isaac's argument is that if these pagan philosophers are able to control their lower passions without the reward of Paradise, then the Christian ascetic who has God's help and the incentive of Paradise should have an increased sense of incentive and the ability to achieve such control.[154] The reference here is clearly to some type of Stoic philosophy, however, it should be noted that these

[152] J. Arendzen. "Isaac of Nineveh," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. 1910. Retrieved May 6, 2013 from New Advent:http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08176a.htm
[153] Isaac.. *Mystic treatises by Isaac of Nineveh*. Edited and Translated by A.J. Wensinck, and Paul Bedjan. Amsterdam: Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen. 1923, pp. 272–273.
[154] Ibid, p. 274.

'philosophers' are presented as indigenous sages who confront Alexander the Great, the Macedonian king who is credited with the introduction of Hellenism into the East.[155] Isaac also uses the term ܚܟܡܐ (*ḥkemā*) to refer to a biblical sage who says, "Haughtiness comes before ruin." Arent Jan Wensinck indicates that Isaac may be paraphrasing Proverbs 16:19 in this quote; however, we should note that Isaac's quote does not convey the same meaning as the biblical statement. Another important passage concerning the sage in Isaac's work juxtaposes the humble servant of God to the philosopher and sage. The sages are forced to remain silent before the one who is truly humble. They listen to his words with awe and the words of the humble seem like words from God himself.[156] We can see that Isaac of Nineveh who lived approximately 150–200 years before al-Tirmidhī in western Khurāsān saw the sages as pagan philosophers and indigenous wise men who can be said to have practiced what came to be known as a form of Stoicism. These sages seem to have held authority in the eyes of Isaac's audience since he uses the sages as a backdrop to elevate the Christian ascetic who is supposedly greater than the sage, not only in his ascetic discipline, but also in his words of wisdom. It is important to note that the sages mentioned by Isaac are noted for their asceticism and not for their theoretical knowledge. For Isaac, the *ḥkemā* (sage) is quite distinct from the Christian ascetic. His knowledge is worldly in juxtaposition to the Christian ascetic whose knowledge is otherworldly.

We also have a rich tradition of wisdom literature by the Jewish sages who have been credited by Rabbinic tradition as the saviors of Judaism after the destruction of the Second Temple. The Rabbinic sages (*ḥākāmīm*) became a class of learned specialists in the Torah and *halakhā* (Jewish religious law) during the period of Late Antiquity. It was the *ḥākamīm* from the

[155] The beginning of Stoicism follows after the great conquests of Alexander the Great. It is possible that the cultural and intellectual exchange brought upon by these conquests facilitated the borrowing of what became Stoicism by Zeno of Citium from Persia rather than the other way around.
[156] Ibid, p. 388.

Levant and Babylon who eventually became the spokesmen for the majority of Jews. This process took almost five centuries beginning after 70 C.E. and culminated in the collection and redaction of the Mishnah and Talmud.[157] The Rabbinic sage came to be associated with the development of a particular brand of Jewish law (generally reffered to as Halakha) and biblical exegesis. They were devoted to the study of the Torah, which consists of the Pentateuch, or the first five ancient books of the Bible. This intellectual and spiritual 'study of the Torah,' in addition to prayer, came to replace the centrality of sacrifice as a means of communicating with God.[158] By the 8th-century C.E. we find that a split developed in the Jewish community between the Rabbanites and the Karaites. The latter group arose in conscious opposition to the Rabbinic sages. The Kairites accepted only the Tanakh as a source for Jewish law and rejected Rabbinic scholarship and exegesis, which the Rabbis and growing circles in Jewish society had gradually come to refer to as the Oral Torah.[159] Both the Rabbanites and the Karaites used the term sage (*ḥākām*) to refer to legal authorities within their respective communities, however, the Rabbanites preferred to use the term as a collective when they referred to their scholarly ancestors who were, in their mind, an important link between the Rabbanites of the Amoraic period and Moses. Over time the Karaites came to use the term *ḥākām* as a title to refer to their

[157] There are two main approaches in modern Jewish scholarship over the origin of the Rabbinic sages. One view holds that a class of Torah specialists arose in the 3rd-century B.C. to oppose the worldly priesthood that came to control the Temple. This class of Torah specialists was the precursor to the Pharisees which were considered the precursors to the Rabbinic sages. This view does not stand up well against the current literary and archaeological record. The second view holds that the Rabbinic sages were independent learned scholars of Torah who gradually developed a legal and exegetical tradition over the four to five hundred years from the fall of the Second Temple to the completion of the Babylonian Talmud. Steven D. Fraade. "The Early Rabbinic Sage," in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Gammie, John D. and Perdue, Leo G. Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns. 1990.
[158] Ibid, p. 436.
[159] Daniel J. Lasker; Joel Beinin. "Karaism." *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*. Executive Editor Norman A. Stillman. Brill Online, 2013. Reference. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 06 May 2013 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/karaism-COM_0012630>

scholars. We will look at two important Jewish scholars from the 10th-century C.E., one a Rabbanite, Saʿādia Gaon (d. 942 C.E.), and the other a Karaite, Yaʿqūb al-Qirqisānī (d. second half of 10th-century C.E.).

In his work *al-Amānāt wa-l-Iʿtiqādāt* (*Book of Beliefs and Opinions*), Saʿādia Gaon seeks to defend the Rabbinate against its Karaite detractors. An important theme that has generally been overlooked in the study of Saʿādia's work is his discussion around the nature of the *ḥakīm* (in Arabic) or *ḥākām* (in Hebrew). Saʿādia includes a chapter on *ḥikma* (wisdom) in his book *al-Amānāt* and distinguishes between what he considers to be the true *ḥakīm* modeled after Solomon as opposed to the *ḥukamā'* of his time whom he accuses of extremism and perversion of religion. Saʿādia writes concerning the *ḥukamāʾ*:

> *min talāmidh al-ḥukamāʾ man zaʿama annahu laysa yanbaghī an yashtaghil aḥadun fī dār al-dunyā bi-shayʾin siwā ṭalab al-ḥikma wa qālū li-anna bihā yūṣalu ilā maʿrifati kulli mā fi al-arḍi min al-ṭabāʾiʿ wa-l-amzija wa-ilā ʿilmin kathīrin mimmā fī l-samāʾ min al-kawākibi wa-l-aflāk.*[160]
>
> Of the followers of the sages are those who claim that it is unnecessary for anyone to busy himself in this world with anything other than seeking wisdom and they say that this is because through it (wisdom) is attained the knowledge of everything in the earth of natures and temperaments and immense knowledge of that which is in the heavens of both planets and heavenly orbs.

After Saʿādia mentions the claims of those whom he says follow the sages, he explains how their approach runs counter to religion:

> *wa-law aṭbaqa al-nās ʿalā ma qāla hāʾulāʾi la-baṭalat al-ḥikma bi-inqiṭāʿ al-nasl bi-tark al-tazwīj wa-law tashāghalu bi-ḥikmat al-bunyati (al-dunyati) waḥdahā tarakū ḥikmat al-dīn wa-l-sharīʿa*

[160] Saʿādia b. Joseph. *Kitāb al-Amānāt wa al-iʿtiqādāt*. Ed. S. Landauer. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1880, p. 309.

> *allatī innamā ḥubbibat ilayhim hādhihi li-tuʿaḍid tilka fa-taḥsan jumlatuhuma*.[161]
>
> Had the people applied what those people have said wisdom would cease to be operative as a result of the cutting off of progeny through the leaving of marriage and had they busied one another with the wisdom of this world exclusively they would have neglected the wisdom of religion and the law for which this (worldly wisdom) was simply made beloved to them in order for them to support that (other wisdom) such that the both of them could be achieved"

For Saʿādia, the sages who are his interlocutors are not the ideal sages of the Bible. King Solomon is rather conspicuously given the title *al-ḥakīm* as if to lay to rest any doubt about who the true *ḥakīm* really is.[162] Saʿādia is not against wisdom, per se, but rather is against the idea that temporal wisdom should become an end in itself. His use of the term *talāmidha* (students) indicates that there may have been a real movement in his time to return to the ideals of the earlier sages, however, these sages are clearly those who are engaged in Hellenistic wisdom. As with Isaac of Nineveh we see a tension in the work of Saʿādia between two types of sages, one representing a 'pagan' ideal and the other representing a Biblical ideal. For Saʿādia, the sages are not only engaged in worldly knowledge, but they are also ascetics. One of his main criticisms of these ascetic sages, from a Jewish perspective, is that they are celibate. It is also significant to note that for both Saʿādia and Isaac, the sages go unnamed. This is also true for al-Tirmidhī's use of the term. Saʿādia lived the first part of his life in Egypt, which was a traditional center of Greek philosophy during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Both Saʿādia and Isaac use the motif of the sage as a platform from which to communicate their ideas giving the impression that we are possibly dealing with a Hellenistic movement that was still active well into the Islamic

[161] Ibid, pp. 310–311.
[162] Ibid, p. 284.

period. The other possibility is that the reactions of these two figures represent something of a resurgence of interest in Hellenistic thought in their times. Saʿādia and Isaac both attempt to use a pagan sage motif in order to position the ideal Christian and Jewish religious virtuoso. The sage is a conduit of divine speech in the case of Isaac, but a scholar of the Torah and religious law in the case of Saʿādia.

Another Jewish scholar who lived at the same time as Saʿādia was the Karaite Yaʿqūb al-Qirqisānī. His work *Kitāb al-Anwār wa al-Marāqib* is a voluminous work on theology and heresiography. For al-Qirqisānī, the philosophers are clearly Aristotelian and Neoplatonic. He specifically mentions Alexander of Aphrodisias[163], John of Caesarea[164] and Porphyry[165] as philosophers who wrote commentaries on Aristotle. Al-Qirqisānī mentions these three philosophers in order to argue that the prophets who brought revelation from God are more worthy to have their revelations be the subject of commentary than Aristotle.[166] The title *ḥakīm,* according to al-Qirqisānī, is a more general term used to refer to these philosophers and indicates their pagan origin. Al-Qirqisānī mentions that the *ḥakīm* is one who would reject circumcision on logical grounds.[167] For al-Qirqisānī, *ḥikma* relates to what can be seen and he refers to it as *mushāhad* (that which can be witnessed and thus that which is created). For example, he argues that God can be described as having a heart because he is called *ḥakīm* since, according to al-

[163] A peripatetic philosopher of the 2st and 3rd-centuries C.E. known for his commentaries on Aristotle. Dorothea Frede. "Alexander of Aphrodisias", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/alexander-aphrodisias/>.
[164] John of Caesarea was also known as John the Grammarian. He was a priest and theologian who lived during the late 6th-century C.E. before the rise of Islam. He was one of the first Neo-Chalcedonians. Kazhdan, Alexander P. The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, ed. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.
[165] Porphyry (d. circa 305 C.E.) was a Neoplatonist philosopher from Tyre in Phoenicia and studied with Plotinus in Rome. He was a promulgator of Plotinus' version of Platonism and sought to harmonize Neoplatonic thought with Aristotle's metaphysics. Emilsson, Eyjólfur, "Porphyry", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/porphyry/>.
[166] A. Yūsuf Ya-qūb al-Qirqisānī. *Kitāb al-Anwār wal-Marāqib: code of Karaite law.* Ed. Nemoy, L. New York: The Alexander Kohut memorial foundation, vol. III. 1939, p. 223.
[167] Ibid, vol. III p. 214.

Qirqisānī, *ḥikma* resides in the heart and is *mushāhad,* i.e., created.[168] In one sense *ḥikma* is a type of knowledge that resides in the heart but, on the other hand, *ḥikma* is a term that al-Qirqisānī uses to indicate a meaning that approximates 'reason' such as when he describes the views of a heretical group of Jews whom he says deny that God can punish individuals because it does not accord with *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *ṣalāḥ* (reason and benefit). The double meaning of *ḥikma* in al-Qirqisānī's writings indicates the ambivalence that often accompanies the use of this term. On one hand, *ḥikma* is knowledge bequeathed by God, but on the other, it can also refer to the wisdom of pagan philosophers and sages.

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* in 9th and 10th-Century C.E. Khurāsān and Transoxania

We will turn now to a discussion of the *ḥakīm* and *ḥikma* among Muslim authors generally contemporaneous with al-Tirmidhī, and we will focus on *ḥikma* and the *ḥukamāʾ* according to the Ṣūfīs, Shīʿīs and Falāsifa. I will begin with a general survey of the current discussion in the literature around the *ḥukamāʾ* and their origins according to the early Ṣūfīs. This discussion is rather limited given that Ṣūfī studies can sometimes suffer from a silo effect in which themes and motifs tend to be restricted to those dealing with Ṣūfīs. This is problematic when dealing with a widely diffuse motif such as the *ḥukamāʾ* and their *ḥikma*.

Annemarie Schimmel and Suzanne Diwald present a hypothesis that the *ḥukamāʾ* of Balkh (of which al-Tirmidhī was associated) represent a Neoplatonic mystical 'school' whose origin returns to the 'master,' Shaqīq al-Balkhī (d. 194/810) and his student Ḥātim al-Aṣamm (d.237/852).[169] This hypothesis was rejected by Bernd Radtke who claims that al-Tirmidhī's

[168] Ibid, vol. II p. 172.
[169] Geneviève Gobillot and Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Le livre de la profondeur des choses*. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion. 1996, p. 79.

education did not include non-Islamic sciences such as Greek natural science and philosophy.[170] In Radtke's view the possible Hellenistic influence on al-Tirmidhī is due to diffuse elements that had permeated Near Eastern culture and society. For Radtke, the *hukamāʾ* were a group of learned Muslim mystics based in Khurāsān and Transoxania. Furthermore, for Radtke, the *ḥakīm* was not a Ṣūfī and he quotes ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) in this regard by relating a comment made by a student of al-Tirmidhī, Abū Bakr al-Warrāq (d.280/893), "Er hat die thora, die evangelien, die psalmen, und die himmlischen bücher gelesen und einen diwan verfasst… Er war ein gotterkennender hākīm (ḥakīmī ʿārif), kein ṣūfī, der ṣūfī ist etwas anderes."[171] Radtke considers the title *ḥakīm* to have been given to al-Tirmidhī by others and not a title that he ascribed to himself since the *ḥakīm* represents a lower rung on the spiritual hierarchy beneath that of *walī* (saint).[172] For Jacqueline Chabbi the *ḥakīm* simply has didactic value during this period, representing a teacher who has knowledge of the human soul.[173] These various viewpoints about the social and didactic role of the *ḥakīm* in the world of al-Tirmidhī provide an outline to better understand why al-Tirmidhī would be given such a title. These definitions tend to privilege a 'mystical' aspect to the role of the *ḥakīm*, however, we should note that the title *ḥakīm* in Khurāsān and Transoxania during the 9th- and 10th-centuries C.E. may not necessarily indicate a mystic per se. We find this title given to the likes of al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī (d. 342/953), whose early life overlapped that of al-Tirmidhī[174] and who was known for his work on

[170] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 15.
[171] Ibid. *Al-Ḥakīm Ein Islamischer*, p. 95.
[172] Ibid. *Theosoph*, p. 95.
[173] Ibid. *Profondeur*, p. 80.
[174] Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī wrote *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* at the behest of the Samānid ruler of Khurāsān, Aḥmad Ismāʿīl, in 902. The fact that al-Samarqandī was chosen to pen such an important work in Ḥanafī theology indicates that he could have at least been in his late thirties or early forties when given this task. If he died in 953 C.E. then he must have lived to a very old age and his life should have overlapped with that of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī by at least forty or fifty years. Bosworth et al. assumes that the title *ḥakīm* must have indicated his mystical propensities. This claim is not clearly substantiated.

Ḥanafī theology, such as his famous creed *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. While al-Samarqandī was also known to have an interest in mysticism, it is not clear that this was a reason for his being titled *ḥakīm*. A traditionist in Khurāsān from the generation following that of al-Samarqandī, who also bore the title of *ḥakīm,* is al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014). Al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī was known as a traditionist with Shīʿī sympathies. However, as James Robson notes, he was given the title of *ḥakīm* after being appointed *qāḍī* (judge) for a time, presumably in Nīshāpūr. Thus, we find that the title seems to possibly indicate a position of legal authority in the context of Khurāsān and Transoxania by the 10th-century C.E. Also in the 10th-century we have another Ḥanafī scholar, al-Ḥakīm al-Zandāwistī (d. 382/992), who wrote *al-Ḥikma al-Ilāhiyya*, a work in the eastern Ḥanafī *ḥikma* tradition. He represents a similar time period to that of al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī and also holds the title of *ḥakīm* although his works do not seem to have mystical propensities.[175] Based on the previous discussion, it remains difficult to tie the title of *ḥakīm* during the 9th- and 10th-centuries C.E. in Khurāsān and Transoxania to mysticism per se. Rather, the *ḥakīm* seems to be a title referring to a learned individual who has attained a position of legal or pedagogical authority. Such an individual was assumed to be well-versed not only in Islamic religious texts, but also in biblical and New Testament traditions, with the ability to draw causal relationships between various aspects of these traditions.

The social use of the title *ḥakīm* in the 9th- and 10th-centuries C.E. only gives us partial insight into how al-Tirmidhī may have understood this term since al-Tirmidhī's discussion is

[175] Zandawistī's work, *al-Ḥikma al-Ilāhiyya,* represents a series of questions and answers concerning the *ḥikma* of various mundane, religious and theological issues. For example, a question is posed as to the *ḥikma* of Abū Bakr (d. 13/634) being the first Caliph in Islam. The *ḥikma* according to Zandāwistī is that Abū Bakr never faltered when given the choice to follow the Prophet. ʿAlī, on the other hand, is said to have sought permission from his father, however, after having taken four steps he repented and took allegiance with the Prophet. These four steps indicate his being four degrees away from the Prophet and thus the fourth Caliph. This type of *ḥikma* literature cannot in any way be understood in a philosophical sense. It represents the ability of the *ḥakīm* to call upon a vast array of biblical and Islamic literature and to make seemingly arbitrary connections between various details in these traditions.

more ideological and gnoseological than social and practical. Nevertheless, it seems clear that this title was still applied to knowledgeable individuals as a term of respect up through the end of the 10th-century. These individuals tend to be Ḥanafī scholars from Khurāsān and Transoxania. It may be that the title, while at one time having been applied to a pagan philosopher or learned individual, had changed its semantic use with the adoption of Arabic as the language of learning and the replacement of local elites by Arabs with the arrival of Islam. It should be noted that Aramaic was the language of communication in the Sassanid Empire prior to Arabic and as we have seen in Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic, the Arabic root for *ḥakīm*, *ḥ-k-m*, transfers quite easily across Semitic languages.

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* among the Ṣūfīs

In *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* by al-Sulamī we find that *ḥikma* is closely coupled with gnosis (*maʿrifa*). The term *maʿrifa* is often presented as divinely gifted knowledge, while *ḥikma* may represent the words that articulate that knowledge. Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. 165/782) is credited to have quoted Jesus as saying, "Do not give wisdom (*ḥikma*) to those who do not deserve it for they will squander it, and do not keep it from those who do deserve it for you will oppress them."[176] Here, *ḥikma* is a special kind of knowledge that should only be given to those who it belongs to, i.e., *ahlahā* (its people). The esoteric nature of this 'special knowledge' is reminiscent of gnostic ideas for whom gnosis is privy only to those initiated as 'knowers.' Nevertheless, *ḥikma* is not purely esoteric here since it is also coupled with *maʿrifa* which, while often being translated as gnosis, refers to God-given knowledge and not a lore or mode of exegetical interpretation. Manṣur b. ʿAmmār (d. 225/839) states this connection between *ḥikma*

[176] Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya wa-yalīhi, dhikr al-niswah al-mutaʿabbidāt al-Ṣūfiyya*. Ed. Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya. 1998, p. 38.

and *maʿrifa* when he says, "Wisdom (*al-ḥikma*) is articulated in the hearts of the knowers of God (*al-ʿārifīn*) with the tongue of true belief…"[177] Al-Sulamī also indicates a connection between *maʿrifa* and *ḥikma* when he describes Abū ʿAlī Al-Jūzajānī (d. 4th Islamic century, 10th-century C.E.) as someone who, "perhaps also spoke something concerning the disciplines of gnosis (*maʿārif*) and wisdom (*ḥikam*)."[178] These two 'disciplines' are, in fact, never explicitly distinguished. Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899) seems to conflate the two terms when he says, "God made knowledge (*ʿilm*) a guide to himself so that he could be known and made wisdom (*ḥikma*) a mercy from him to them so that he could show compassion. So, knowledge is a guide to God and *maʿrifa* (gnosis) is an indication of God…"[179] Shāh al-Kirmānī (d. 299/911) also reiterates this connection between *ḥikma* and *maʿrifa* when he says, "the sign of wisdom (*ḥikma*) is knowledge (*maʿrifa*) of the relative values of people."[180] In the *Ṭabaqāt* we find either a conflation of wisdom (*ḥikma*) with gnosis (*maʿrifa*) or a sense in which *ḥikma* is the outward spoken form of an inward gifted knowledge. We do find several other meanings of *ḥikma*, however, they do not follow this general trend. For example, Ruwaym b. Aḥmad (d. 303/915) states, "Of the wisdom (*ḥikam*) of the sage (*ḥakīm*) is that he shows latitude for his brothers in outward rulings."[181] Here *ḥikma* demonstrates an approach to the application of legal rulings to others. The basic idea here is that the individual should be restrictive with himself or herself but show latitude to others. Another approach is represented in the words of Yūsuf b. al-Ḥusayn of Rayy (d. 304/916) who links *ḥikma* to action or the implementation of knowledge. He says, "Through proper dealing (*adab*) you will understand knowledge, and through knowledge actions

[177] Ibid, p. 117.
[178] Ibid, p. 196.
[179] Ibid, p. 184.
[180] Ibid, p. 158.
[181] Ibid, p. 148.

will become correct, and through action you will arrive at wisdom (*ḥikma*), and through wisdom (*ḥikma*) you will understand renunciation of the world (*al-zuhd*)…"[182]

Al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) is an important figure in the development of proto-Sufism. Alexander Knysh along with Josef van Ess asserts that al-Muḥāsibī may not have been a Ṣūfī but more of a 'moralizing theologian' who took early Islamic theology and developed it into a sophisticated psychology and cardiology.[183] Unlike later mystics such as al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī, al-Muḥāsibī does not develop a gnoseology that would clarify the ambiguous space between prophecy and human knowledge based on experience. For example, al-Muḥāsibī does not discuss the nature of *ḥikma* even though he makes frequent mention of the purveyors of that *ḥikma,* i.e., the *ḥukamāʾ*. Al-Muḥāsibī certainly sees the *ḥukamāʾ* as a source of authority since several of his works begin with quotations from as yet unknown 'sages.'[184] However, al-Muḥāsibī does not leave us completely in the dark. In one of the quotes that he ascribes to the *ḥukamāʾ*, we find an accurate and complete, if not slightly modified, rendition of the "Parable of the Sower" from the New Testament. Al-Muḥāsibī's rendition does not closely follow any one particular version in either Matthew, Mark or Luke. Nor does al-Muḥāsibī's rendition follow particularly close to the Syriac New Testament nor the Arabic translation of the *Diatessaron*. Nevertheless, all of the main elements of the parable are there. What makes al-Muḥāsibī's use of the parable significant is how he uses it to explain the function of the *ḥakīm*. For al-Muḥāsibī the "sower" is like the "*ḥakīm*" and the seed is like the words that this *ḥakīm* speaks, i.e., *ḥikma*.[185] So, the Parable of the Sower from the New Testament changes from being a parable used by

[182] Ibid, p. 154.
[183] Knysh, Alexander. *Islamic mysticism, a short history*. Brill, 2010. p. 45. Ess, Josef van. *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*. Berlin: W. de Gruyter. 1991, vol. 4, p. 195 and 197.
[184] We find specific mention of the *ḥukamāʾ* in al-Muḥāsibī's *Al-Riʿāya fī Ḥuqūq Allāh* and *Adab al-Nufūs* which in fact begins with a quote from the *ḥukamāʾ* who advises others to fear God.
[185] Al-Muḥāsibī doesn't use the term *ḥikma* here but rather *ṣawāb al-kalām* or correct speech.

Jesus to elucidate the types of individuals who have an ability to hear God's Word to a focus on the *ḥakīm* as a conduit for this divine knowledge. The degree to which al-Muḥāsibī was aware of the source of this parable is not clear. The fact that such a parable was put into the mouths of the *ḥukamāʾ* is significant in that it connects, even if only tenuously, the *ḥukamāʾ* to scriptural knowledge. This does have some parallel to al-Tirmidhī's use of the term *ḥukamāʾ*, since he claims that the *ḥukamāʾ* who are mentioned in the Injīl (Gospels) are, actually, the Muslims.[186] This quote is not found in the New Testament and is one of the traditions attributed to Jesus in the Ḥadīth literature.

Al-Junayd is considered one of the most celebrated orthodox exponents of the 'sober' school of Sufism and is often credited with a reconciliation of mystical experience to the legal and theological norms of his time.[187] Knysh explains how Junayd's dichotomy between *fanāʾ* (annihilation) and *baqāʾ* (subsistence) provided a possible rationale for the superiority of legalism over mysticism, a concession to the powers that be. This may have been a direct result of the Inquisition of Ghulām Khalīl (d. 275/888–889), which spared al-Junayd, as he was able to count himself among the doctors of the law.[188] Al-Junayd clearly provides a framework for mystics that successfully incorporated the legal and mystical spheres into a comprehensive mystical methodology. It is not clear whether this was the result of political and religious circumstances or whether he was actually attempting a rapprochement between two diverging tendencies within Islam. While al-Junayd's *fanāʾ*/*baqāʾ* dichotomy is intriguing and

[186] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 288.
[187] Arberry, AJ. "al-Djunayd." *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2013. Reference. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 17 September 2013. <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-djunayd-SIM_2117>
[188] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, p. 55

groundbreaking, it is not the only focus of his mystical pedagogy.[189] In his *Rasāʾil* we consistently find a gnoseology more similar to the mysticism of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī whose approach we will address later. Al-Junayd places *ḥikma* in direct contrast to outward knowledge (*ʿilm*) and elevates the *ḥakīm* above the doctor of law (*ʿālim*). The *Letters of Junayd* begin with a letter from al-Junayd to ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān al-Makkī (d. 291/903 or 297/909) whom he praises as one who was given, "of knowledge and wisdom (*ḥikma*) the highest of its levels." The letter proceeds to warn against the deluding nature of outward knowledge and the inability of those who are specialists in the normative Islamic disciplines to speak cogently about 'inner realities.'[190] What follows is a dialog between a scholar of the outward (*ʿālim*) and a sage (*ḥakīm*) who brings the *ʿālim* to tears and facilitates the "dawning of the sun of *ḥikma* and the attainment of the limpidity of its light."[191] The *ḥakīm* is stylized as a 'physician of the heart' who can cure the 'disorders' of the scholar. The scholar pleads with the *ḥakīm*, "please give me more of this medicine of yours for my wound has become severe."[192] At this point the scholar is broken and concedes that the *ḥakīm* is "more knowledgeable about what is hidden in my innermost secret."[193] Al-Junayd invokes an analogy that likens the physician of the outward body to the sincere, refined *ḥakīm* who, like the physician, treats the often subtle and hidden diseases within the body. Likewise, the *ḥakīm* is knowledgeable of the inner maladies of the soul.[194] For al-Junayd, the *ḥakīm* is someone sanctioned by God to speak wisdom (*ḥikma*), which is a type of personal revelatory knowledge. He says, "With that, know that the speakers of *ḥikma* don't speak except after they are permitted to do so, but when they do, great benefit descends upon those

[189] Abū al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Junayd. *Rasāʾil al-Junayd.* Ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir, Ḥasan. Al-Qāhira: Buraʿī Wijdawī. 1988.
[190] Ibid, pp. 8–9.
[191] Ibid, p. 9.
[192] Ibid, p. 9.
[193] Ibid, p. 9.
[194] Ibid, p. 11.

who are given to hear it."[195] *Ḥikma* in al-Junayd's mystical thought is something that runs or streams (*jāriya*) and is associated closely with light (*nūr*).[196] A consistent motif in his *Rasāʾil* is that of the ordinary believer immersed in heedlessness (*ghafla*) who comes into contact with someone whose words are characteristic of *ḥikma,* wisdom from God. This wisdom pours over the soul of the listener who becomes perplexed and disoriented. This state is the first stage of awakening and occurs at the hands of the *ḥakīm* and not the Ṣūfī as we might have expected. In fact, the word Ṣūfī is not used anywhere in al-Junayd's letters.

Another Ṣūfī and one of al-Junayd's associates in Baghdād was Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899) a contemporary of al-Junayd in Baghdād and a student of Sarī al-Saqatī (d. 253/867). We also find that the *ḥukamāʾ* are a significant motif in his *Kitāb al-Ṣidq*. Kharrāz does not contrast between the *ḥukamāʾ* and the *ʿulamāʾ* as does al-Junayd. For Kharrāz, the *ḥukamāʾ* seem to be a distinct and well known group since he mentions in *Kitāb al-Ṣidq* that "the insightful of the *ḥukamāʾ* have agreed that this world is the self and what it desires," and "the *ḥukamāʾ* have come to consensus that it (love) results from the constant mention of blessings." For Kharrāz to mention that the *ḥukamāʾ* have "agreed" or "found consensus" on a particular subject suggests that the literature of this group was accessible or that their general views were known to his audience. A student of Kharrāz asks for him to explain the saying of "the *ḥakīm*" about the nature of contentment as being a state of happiness and joyfulness in the face of calamities.[197] Kharrāz goes on to explain that the presence of God fills the heart of the servant such that it becomes greater than the calamities that beset that individual.[198] The familiar theme of balance

[195] Ibid, p. 9.
[196] Ibid, pp. 3, 5, 36.
[197] This definition of contentment fits Stoic values of restraint in the face of external difficulties.
[198] Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz. *Kitāb al-ṣidq, aw, al-ṭarīq al-sālima.* Ed. Ibrāhīm al-Munʿim Khalīl. Bayrūt: Manshūrāt Muḥammad ʿAlī Bayḍūn. 2001. p.88

through opposing states is also attributed to the *ḥukamāʾ*. Kharrāz states, *man ūtiya min al-maḥabbati shayʾan fa lam yuʾtā mithlahu min al khashya fa-huwa makhḍūʿ*, "whoever is given some love but is not given its equivalent amount in terms of fear then he is deceived."[199] Most of the other references to the *ḥukamāʾ* in *Kitāb al-Ṣidq* involve general statements about abstinence from the world and closeness to God that fit a general ascetic/mystical model.

None of the Ṣūfīs and proto-Ṣūfīs mentioned above clearly state who the *ḥukamāʾ* are or what *ḥikma* is in well-defined terms. The closest we get is with al-Junayd who likens the *ḥakīm* to a *ṭabīb* (physician), which fits a Hellenistic model since medicine (*ṭibb*) and philosophy (*ḥikma*) are often mentioned together as a genre well into the Islamic period.[200] Al-Junayd sees the *ḥakīm* as a recipient of divine knowledge, a kind of knowledge that can cure the soul just as the physician is able to cure bodies. We might suggest that the dichotomy between physician and philosopher, a dichotomy that was prominent in the Hellenistic culture of Late Antiquity, may have been transposed into an Islamic milieu as the doctor of the law (*ʿālim*) and the sage (*ḥakīm*) such as we find in the writing of al-Junayd.

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* among the Early Ismāʿīlī Shīʿīs

We find the closest connection to al-Tirmidhī's concept of the *ḥakīm* and the nature of the *ḥakīm's* wisdom (*ḥikma*) in the writings of early Ismāʿīlīs of the early 10th-century C.E. According to Yves Marquet, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā often apply the sobriquet *ḥakīm* to the Imām of

[199] Ibid, p.84

[200] We have the work *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ wa-l-ḥukamāʾ* by Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Ḥassān al-Andalūsī written in 377/987. This work, however seems to have only relied on western sources as opposed to the eastern Greek sources that informed works of the same genre mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 385-8/995-8). Ibn al-Nadīm in his *Fihrist* also mentions several other books of the same genre from the 3rd Islamic century (9th-century C.E.) by Isḥāq b. Ḥunayn (d. 298/911) titled *Tārīkh al-aṭibbāʾ wa-l-ḥukamāʾ*. Al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 284/897) includes stories of *aṭibbāʾ* and *ḥukamāʾ* in his writings as does Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq (d. 260/873) in his book *Nawādir al-Falāsiṭa*. It is clear that Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq relied heavily on the work of John of Caesarea mentioned earlier.

the age, or a great prophet or to a successor of that prophet.[201] However, the term *ḥakīm* can also designate the Imām in contradistinction to the Prophet of the time.[202] While the term generally applies to prophets, Imāms and their successors, such as the forty *abdāl* (substitutes) it can also apply to ancient philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras.[203] Even astrologers, alchemists and magicians receive the title of *ḥukamā'* (sages) in the *Siwān al-Ḥikma*.[204] Here we can see a general application of the term *ḥakīm* to the Imam of the time who takes his knowledge from a great prophet. This is balanced by the fact that the term is offered loosely to include other types of learned individuals who, in the mind of the Ikhwān, also received their knowledge originally from a prophet of some sort. Here the Ikhwān follow the Ismāʿīlī approach mentioned by Paul Walker,[205] which creates a narrative for the origins of philosophical and hermetic sciences in the persons of prophets. For the Ikhwān, the *ḥukamāʾ* represent any knowledge or wisdom that has a divine origin of some kind. Marquet shows how the *ḥukamāʾ*, as purveyors of "good philosophy", are contrasted to what the Ikhwān call the "anti-prophets" who are characterized as materialists and atheists.[206] They are referred to as *frères des dèmons* who practice illicit magic and lead people astray. Here we find that the *ḥukamāʾ* offer a convenient catch-all to set up the main dichotomy between knowledge that is inspired and therefore has a divine source relating to the soul, as opposed to human-knowledge, which is materialistic and the purview of the anti-philosophers.

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[201] Yves Marquet. *La philosophie des Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ*. Nouvelle éd. augmentée. Milan: Archè. 1991. p. 461.
[202] Ibid, p. 462
[203] Ibid, p. 462
[204] ʿAlī b. Zayd al-Bayhaqī. *Tatimma ṣiwān al-ḥikma: texts and studies*. Ed. Fuat Sezgin, Carl Ehrig-Eggert, and E. Neubauer. Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University. 2005.
[205] Walker, Paul Ernest. *Early philosophical Shīʿism: the Ismāʿīlī Neoplatonism of Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī.* Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press. 1993.
[206] Ibid, p. 462

The Ikhwān are very close to other early Ismaʿīlis of the 10th-century C.E. such as Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933-34) who is known to have engaged in a famous polemical debate with the renowned physician and philosopher Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925 or d. 323/935) as summarized in the triumphalist work of al-Rāzī *Aʿlām al-Nubuwwa*. It is Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī who comes closest to identifying *ḥikma* and the *ḥakīm* in terms that mimic al-Tirmidhī's concept of these terms. In his *Kitāb al-Zīna* al-Rāzī describes God as the Ḥakīm because he separates between opposites by placing medial properties between them, for example, the separation of hot and cold through the mediation of wet and dry. This separation and maintenance of the opposites is exemplary of God's wisdom and the balance he maintains in the world. This is close to a Pythagorean concept of opposites, however, the opposites (hot, cold, wet and dry) mentioned by Abū Ḥātim are not represented in the ten primary opposites that govern the world according to later Pythagoreans.[207] It may be that the allusion here is to Greek Galenic medicine that uses hot, cold, wet and dry as a heuristic for understanding balance and imbalance in the body.

It is clear that the *ḥukamāʾ* represent a motif of learned individuals that dates prior to the Islamic conquests and continues up through the 10th-century C.E. In Christian, Jewish, Ṣūfī and Shīʿī sources the *ḥukamāʾ* function as a backdrop to accentuate the various ideals of these disparate religious viewpoints. The *ḥukamāʾ* are useful as a motif during this period particularly because they are not well defined as a category of learned specialists, yet they still seem to convey a sense of authority. All of the groups surveyed here tend to be outliers with respect to the dominant episteme of the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*. So, while *ḥikma* is not a major knowledge-type in

[207] Aristotle describes Pythagorean doctrine as having tern primary opposites in his *Metaphysics* (986a). It seems that this doctrine was not the original Pythagorean doctrine which was only composed of two original sets of opposites. See J. A. Philip. "Aristotle's Sources for Pythagorean Doctrine." *Pheonix*, vol. 17, no. 4 (Winter 1963) p. 252. Aristotle makes the distinction between 'definite opposites' (ἐναντιότητας) such as the limited and the unlimited and "chance opposites" such as white and black, large and small.

Rosenthal's schematization of knowledge in Islam, it clearly was important for more marginal groups. In a sense, al-Tirmidhī's development of *ḥikma* and stylization of the *ḥukamāʾ* brings this marginal discourse stream into the circle of more mainstream Sunnī thought. The consistent reference in both Muslim and non-Muslim sources to a Hellenistic precedent for the *ḥukamāʾ* indicates that it is a Greek model that most likely serves for this motif. Also, the important connections to biblical and New Testament literature for the *ḥukamāʾ* indicates that this Hellenistic motif filtered down to the Muslims from eastern Christians who were steeped in this lore for centuries before the Arab/Muslim conquests of the 7th-century C.E.

Ḥikma and the *Ḥakīm* in the Theosophy of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's contribution to the development of what became normative Sufism sometime in the late 10th- and early 11th-centuries C.E. has not been sufficiently acknowledged, nor has his contribution to later Ṣūfī metaphysics been understood in its entirety. One factor that has led to this lack of development in the study of al-Tirmidhī and his mystical theosophy is that current theories differ widely on the core elements of his doctrine as well as the sources of his inspiration. Yves Marquet considers al-Tirmidhī to have been the first mystic to introduce Neoplatonic doctrines into Islamic mysticism as a prelude to Ibn ʿArabī.[208] Bernd Radtke, on the other hand, acknowledges that al-Tirmidhī was influenced by Neoplatonic and Hermetic elements, yet counters by proposing that these were merely diffuse and amorphous elements within al-Tirmidhī's educational milieu. According to Radtke, these diffuse elements were picked up by al-Tirmidhī and merged by him into a synthesis that combined theology, jurisprudence, Ḥadīth speculation and various aspects of Gnosticism.[209] Radtke has gone the

[208] Ibid. "Al-Tirmidhī," *EI2*.
[209] Ibid. "Ḥakīm Termedī," *EIr*.

farthest in situating al-Tirmidhī's thought by contrasting and differentiating his *ḥikma* (wisdom) from what later was known as illuminationist wisdom (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), propounded by the famous Suhrawardī al-Maqṭūl (d. 587/1191) who was executed for heresy.[210] Radtke's argument that al-Tirmidhī's *ḥikma* (wisdom) is fundamentally different than Suhrawardī's *ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (wisdom of illumination) is convincing. However, Radtke's discussion of *ḥikma* in "Theologie und Philosophie" does not facilitate our understanding of al-Tirmdhī's concept of *ḥikma*, primarily because he does not provide a methodology for interpreting *ḥikma* within al-Tirmidhī's own context. We depart from Radtke in that we do not support the idea that al-Tirmidhī's use of Hellenistic thought is simply acquired through diffuse elements. Our study of al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* indicates that al-Tirmidhī's use of Hellenistic elements is both intentional and selective.

In addition to Marquet and Radtke, Franz Rosenthal discusses the place of knowledge (*ʿilm*) and wisdom (*ḥikma*) as it relates to al-Tirmidhī. Rosenthal's discussion tends to favor an overly philological approach to the word *ʿilm* and attempts to draw a distinction between Islam, a tradition he says focuses on *ʿilm*, and Christianity, a tradition that he claims favors *ḥikma*. This approach ignores the nuances in meaning that are characteristic of the way knowledge was categorized by al-Tirmidhī and others during the period under discussion. As mentioned earlier, Rosenthal mistakenly assumes that Al-Tirmidhī considers *ʿilm* and *ḥikma* to be synonymous.[211] According to my reading of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, he does not use the term *ḥikma* haphazardly. He clearly delineates *ḥikma* as a special type of knowledge (*ʿilm*) and is consistent in his use of the term.

[210] Radtke, Bernd. "Theosophie (Ḥikma) und Philosophie (Falsafa). Ein Beitrag zur Frage der ḥikmat al-mašriq\al-i ̧šrāq." In: *Asiatische Studien* 42 (1988), pp. 157–158.
[211] Franz Rosenthal. *Knowledge Triumphant, the Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*. Leiden, Brill. 1970. p. 38.

It is not possible, though, to gain a complete view of al-Tirmidhī's understanding of *ḥikma* without a wide reading of his works, which are varied and complex. Al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* provides us with probably the most concise and elaborate explanation of *ḥikma* and its place in his mystical theosophy. Nevertheless, references to *ḥikma* abound in his other works such as *Nawādir al-Uṣūl, ʿIlm al-Awliyā'* and *Sīrat al-Awliyā'* among others. Al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* has largely been unexplored partly due to the limited accessibility of *KH*, of which only one manuscript is extant and whose script is difficult to decipher due to the absence of dotting on the majority of the letters. *KH* is mentioned by Sezgin in *Geschichte des arabischen Schriftums* among the eighty works he attributes to al-Tirmidhī ranging from large books to small essays of only a few pages.[212] *KH* closely follows al-Tirmidhī's style and use of terminology suggesting that it can be authentically attributed to al-Tirmidhī. Furthermore, our transcription of *KH* in Appendix B provides notes that indicate the many parallels between *KH* and other works that belong to al-Tirmidhī. Bernd Radtke, considered the foremost expert on al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, also lists *KH* amongst al-Tirmidhī's works but does not discuss the contents of the work in detail or its implications for al-Tirmidhī's thought. Hence, the combination of the complexity of al-Tirmidhī's style coupled with his voluminous literary output and the relative inaccessibility of *KH* have conspired to leave al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* largely unexplored. The implications of this for al-Tirmidhī's rather widely discussed doctrine of sainthood (*walāya*) are highly significant because al-Tirmidhī uses *ḥikma* to frame his doctrine of *walāya*.

One of the key passages on the relationship between *ʿilm* and *ḥikma* by al-Tirmidhī is found in *NU*. In his commentary on a *ḥadīth* concerning the nature of the *awliyāʾ* (saints) al-Tirmidhī proceeds to divide the people of knowledge into three categories. The first category is

[212] Sezgin, Fuat. *Geschichte des arabischen schriftums*. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1967, vol. 1, pp. 653–659.

ʿulamāʾ bi-umūr Allāh taʿālā min al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām (scholars of the commandments of God most high concerning the permissible and impermissible). These are the scholars of sacred law who specialize in jurisprudence. Al-Tirmidhī describes them as being known by the signs of knowledge. The second category is the scholars of God's management (*tadbīr*) of the world, and they have upon them the sign of *ḥikma* and are known by their wisdom. Finally, the third category of "men of knowledge" discusses those knowledgeable through God (*ʿulamāʾ bi-Allāh*), and they have upon them the sign of God's light and his awe-inspiring presence (*hayba*) and are known through God himself. This final category, according to al-Tirmidhī, represents the *awliyāʾ*.[213] This tri-partite division is reinforced in another place in the *NU* where al-Tirmidhī describes the three groups who bear God's knowledge as the doctors of the law (*ʿulamāʾ*), the sages (*ḥukamāʾ*), and the great ones (*kubarāʾ*) who are synonymous in al-Tirmidhī's writing with the *awliyāʾ*.[214] Here we can see a clear distinction between three groups that all bear a different kind of knowledge. The *ḥukamāʾ* are clearly a level distinct from the *awliyāʾ* and inferior to them. This distinction between *ḥukamāʾ* and *awliyāʾ* is further supported in *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* where the functions of the *ḥukamāʾ* and the *awliyāʾ* are delineated in juxtaposition to one another.[215] Prior scholarship has seemed to conflate the *ḥukamāʾ* and *awliyāʾ*, assuming that the *ḥukamāʾ* are simply a synonymous term for the *awliyāʾ*. As we will see, such a hypothesis does not stand up to scrutiny through a close reading of al-Tirmidhī's works.

In the opening of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, al-Tirmidhī defines *ḥikma* as "the judgment of things, according to their various harmful properties, in the way they function and proceed from the Lord to his servant, and from the servant to his Lord in terms of their causes and effects."[216] This

[213] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 3, pp. 152–153.
[214] Ibid, vol. 3, p. 23.
[215] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Kitāb al-ḥikma*. Ms. Yazma Haraççıoğlu 806. Bursa, Inebey Library.
[216] Ibid, fol. 1v.

definition falls directly in line with Neopythagorean definitions of wisdom (*sophia*) as knowledge of things both divine and human.[217] In his definition of *ḥikma* al-Tirmidhī joins two opposites,[218] the inward (*bāṭin*) and outward (*ẓāhir*). The *ḥikma* of the *ḥakīm* is knowledge that encompasses inward (*bāṭin*) causes and effects, i.e., those that proceed from the Lord to his servant and outward (*ẓāhir*) causes and effects, i.e., those that proceed from the servant to his Lord. This passage is critical to our understanding of al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* because al-Tirmidhī is the first to provide a full and coherent definition of *ḥikma* across all of the figures we have discussed so far. This definition is neither purely metaphysical nor wholly cosmological. It treats *ḥikma* as something cosmological in the sense that *ḥikma* is concerned with causes and effects, but then characterizes it as metaphysical when described as a light knowledge that proceeds from God. In this way al-Tirmidhī's definition somewhat resembles al-Fārābī's statement that wisdom is knowledge of remote causes.[219]

The knowledge of opposites is the function par excellence of the *ḥakīm* in al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma*. Al-Tirmidhī goes on to state in *KH* that the *ḥakīm* is indispensable to the knowledge of good and evil. For example, he states, "There is nothing closer to good than evil nor anything farther. Ignorance joins them together in one place [i.e., conflates them] and wisdom separates between them so that they are farther apart than the heaven and the earth because wisdom makes evil the lowest of the low and good the highest of the high." We can see that according to al-Tirmidhī the knowledge of the *ḥakīm* is that which distinguishes between opposites and keeps them separate in an ethical sense. We can see here that al-Tirmidhī is closest

[217] Ibid. *Knowledge triumphant*, p. 36.
[218] I use the word opposite here for the Arabic word *ḍid* – plural *aḍiddad*. I use the term opposite in contrast to 'contrary' as used by W. D. Ross in his translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Henry Corbin uses the Latin term *coincidentia oppisotorum* in a different sense than contrary. For Corbin *coincidentia oppisotorum* is a term that refers to contrary terms that are joined in a single phrase such as 'spiritual body'.
[219] Ibid, p. 36.

to Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī's discussion on *ḥikma*, and he provides a similar yet much simpler definition of *ḥikma* in terms of hot, cold, wet and dry. What is significant in al-Tirmdhī's discussion is the types of opposites that he uses. As mentioned previously, Aristotle describes the later Pythagoreans as proposing ten opposites that are the bases of the universe. These are limited-unlimited, odd-even, one-many, right-left, male-female, immobile-mobile, straight-curved, light-dark, good-evil and square-rectangle. We don't find this exact list of opposites in *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, but we find some of these among the many opposites al-Tirmidhī uses throughout the book. The three most prominent are *khayr* and *sharr* (good and evil),[220] *mutaḥarrik* and *sākin* (mobile and immobile),[221] *ḍawʾ* and *ẓulma* (light and darkness).[222] We find possible indirect references to some of the other Pythagorean opposites such as *lā maḥdūd* (unlimited),[223] however, its contrary *maḥdūd* (limited) is not mentioned specifically. Al-Tirmidhī mentions male and female pairs such as *ikhwānika wa akhawātika* (your brothers and sisters)[224] but doesn't mention male and female as a specific set of opposites. He also mentions right and left, but in the Qurʾānic context of the people of the right hand (*aṣḥāb al-yamīn*) and the people of the left hand (*aṣḥāb al-shimāl*).[225] The point here is not to prove that al-Tirmidhī was a Pythagorean, but rather to demonstrate that his concept of *ḥikma* incorporates more elements of Pythagoreanism than other figures we have studied so far. Al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology is neither Neoplatonic nor gnostic in its structure. Rather than proposing a series of emanations from an abstract One such as the Neoplatonists do, al-Tirmidhī sees the world as an interplay of opposites that indicate the existence of a hidden metaphysical realm, or *ghayb*. Thus, we see that the *ḥakīm*

[220] Ibid. *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, fol. 6r.
[221] Ibid, fol. 3v.
[222] Ibid, fol. 4v.
[223] Ibid, fol. 5v.
[224] Ibid, fol. 3v.
[225] Ibid, fol. 2v.

is the one who is knowledgeable of these opposites and functions as a means of maintaining the harmony of opposites in nature.

Like al-Junayd, al-Tirmidhī draws on the analogy of the physician (*ṭabīb*) to explain who the *ḥakīm* is and how he functions in the world. Just as the *ṭabīb* is the physician of the physical body, the *ḥakīm* is the physician of the metaphysical body, or the soul. Al-Tirmidhī accurately details the four humours and their corresponding qualities and seasons in *KH*.[226] This clearly demonstrates that al-Tirmidhī must have studied Greek medicine and possibly some type of Hellenistic philosophy such as Pythagoreanism and Stoicism sometime in his career. Just as the world is full of harmful animals and insects that can make us ill, so too the person traveling on the path (*ṭarīq*) to God will find pitfalls every step of the way. The *ḥakīm* can see these pitfalls and avoid them through his knowledge of the opposites that God establishes in the world.[227] For al-Tirmidhī, *ḥikma* has an ethical value in that it helps one to make decisions about what is right and wrong in the particular moment. This has within it a veiled criticism of the *ʿulamāʾ* (the scholarly class) who, according to al-Tirmidhī, do not have the sufficient tools for making ethical judgments from their textual knowledge alone.

Al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* does not only function to explain ethics, but actually helps to define his notion of *walāya* (sainthood). In *NU* al-Tirmidhī differentiates the *walī* from the *ḥakīm* by juxtaposing the first Rightly Guided Caliph Abū Bakr (d. 13/634) to ʿUmar (d. 23/644), the second Rightly Guided Caliph.[228] Al-Tirmidhī relates a story about a time when Bakr comes from Yemen with three swords. When his son sees him upon his return, his son asks for one of the swords and Abū Bakr gives it to him. The sword was decorated with gilding.

[226] Ibid, fol. 5v.
[227] Ibid, fol. 6v.
[228] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 3, p. 127-132.

ʿUmar saw what happened and approached Abū Bakr stating that he, ʿUmar, had a stronger claim to the sword. Abū Bakr agreed and ʿUmar proceeded to take the sword from Abū Bakr's son. Then, ʿUmar went home and separated the gilding from the blade. He then gave the blade back to Abū Bakr's son and returned the gilding to Abū Bakr, the Caliph at the time. Al-Tirmidhī explains that Abū Bakr represents the *walī* and is more like the Prophet Muḥammad, while ʿUmar represents the *ḥakīm*. Abū Bakr gives freely without any concern for the value of the sword. He sees the need in the moment and addresses it as inspiration from God. ʿUmar, on the other hand, wants to do what is right. He is the *ḥakīm* who differentiates right from wrong. He takes the blade and gives it to the son of Abū Bakr who had asked for the sword, so Abū Bakr's son still received the sword in the end. However, ʿUmar proceeds to give the gilding to Abū Bakr whom he believes to have a greater need for it as the leader of the fledgling Muslim community. Abū Bakr follows ʿUmar's suggestion when ʿUmar presents this argument for what is 'right' but, according to al-Tirmidhī, Abū Bakr's first action was the inspired action, whereas ʿUmar's was filtered through an abstract process or evaluation. One significant aspect of this story related by al-Tirmidhī is that both the motifs of *walī* and *ḥakīm* are embodied as Muslim historical figures. The ideal *walī* is Abū Bakr and the ideal *ḥakīm* is ʿUmar. Abū Bakr is higher in rank than ʿUmar, but both are 'correct' according to al-Tirmidhī within their own levels of *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *maʿrifa* (gnosis). This and other stories told by al-Tirmidhī explain how the *ḥakīm* and the *walī* represent separate levels of spiritual attainment and gnosis, although it is significant to note that the *walī* encompasses the *ḥakīm*, but the *ḥakīm* does not encompass the *walī*. The level of the *ḥakīm* frames the level of the *walī* since it is the *walī* who transcends the dualism of right and wrong. Al-Tirmidhī is clearly recasting an ancient motif in Islamic terms. Furthermore, in *KH* the only authority mentioned in the book with respect to *ḥikma* is someone he titles, *al-ḥakīm* or

‘The Sage’. This person is the early traditionist Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 110/728 or 114/732), who is credited with introducing many Jewish and Christian traditions into the Ḥadīth corpus knows as Isrāʾīliyyāt.

The *ḥakīm* and his *ḥikma* exist at the level of opposites. This is a level of knowledge above the rules of permissibility and impermissibility represented by jurisprudence or Fiqh. *Ḥikma* is an ethical, situational type of knowledge that requires judgments of right and wrong. Essentially, what al-Tirmidhī is saying is that knowledge of the law is not enough to make ethical judgments. If we understand al-Tirmidhī’s Ḥanafī background, the role of the *ḥakīm* as someone who makes ethical judgments is more clearly understood. In the next chapter we will be explaining in more detail al-Tirmidhī’s Ḥanafī credentials. The Ḥanafī School of law is unique among the schools of Islamic jurisprudence in that it includes a legal procedure called *istiḥsān* (juristic preference). That is, if the judge deems that the rule of law does not serve the aims of the law, the judge can use his juristic preference to rule outside of the legal requirements. While Ḥanafī *uṣūl* (legal methodology) was systematized in the 4th- Islamic century (10th-century C.E.), it is obvious from al-Tirmidhī’s own works that the main points of Ḥanafī legal methodology were under discussion in the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). Hence, the motif of the *ḥakīm* is a complex one in al-Tirmidhī’s thought and it is not clear whether current ideas in his time were informing his concept of the sage more or less than ancient ones were. Both of these influences seem to have played an important role and that the product was al-Tirmidhī’s own unique concept of wisdom.

If al-Tirmidhi developed a distinct concept of wisdom for the sage based on Hellenistic and Islamic precedents, then the question is how this relates to the knowledge of the saint. The *walī,* in al-Tirmidhī’s gnoseology rises even above the *ḥikma* of the *ḥakīm*. He or she (since al-

Tirmidhī demonstrates that women can also be *awliyāʾ*) are not bound by opposites, but just like Abū Bakr in his giving of the sword to his son, they take no heed of what is particularly right or wrong in a given situation but act according to what God wants in the moment and are thus inspired. The *walī* in al-Tirmidhī's epistemology characterizes the *maqām* (station) of *fardāniyya* (singularity, non-duality) precisely because the *walī* goes beyond the dualities that are characteristic of the world of the *ḥakīm*. The *walī,* according to al-Tirmidhī, looks at the world in terms of one source and becomes a conduit for the effusion of benefit from that source into a world of dualities. In a fascinating passage from *KH* al-Tirmidhī portrays the *ḥakīm* and the *walī* as if they are upon a path walking through the wilderness. The *ḥakīm* has knowledge of the various beasts of prey that can harm him on this path. The beasts are likened to the desires that waylay a traveler to God that may take him unawares. While the *ḥakīm* has knowledge of these capricious desires that can cause harm, he is not completely protected from them. He must use his knowledge of them to protect himself from their danger. The *walī,* on the other hand, walks through this scape completely unscathed. The beasts of prey do not touch him just as caprice does not affect him. According to al-Tirmidhī, the *ḥakīm* reaps the benefit of protection through his companionship with the *walī*. In *KH* the *ḥakīm* himself has a contrary, which is often the *safīh* (or the imbecile) while the *walī* has no opposite in al-Tirmidhī's writing since the *walī* is the inheritor of the prophets and receives divine knowledge directly from God. The *walī* is also a *muḥaddath* or one 'spoken to directly by God' and is thus the conduit for God's mercy into the world. Al-Tirmidhī's tri-partite division of knowledge into *ʿilm*, *ḥikma* and *maʿrifa* provides a strong basis for understanding *ḥikma* in relation to both *ʿilm* and *maʿrifa*. Not only does this help in understanding how al-Tirmidhī formed his concept of *walāya,* but emphasizes its unique structure in its own right among early Islamic mystics. We can see from this discussion that

knowledge of the episteme helps to highlight how al-Tirmidhī is offering a new and unique contribution to Islamic mystical thought. Not only does the motif of the *ḥakīm* draw upon hellenistic and biblical precedents, but it reflects legal and theological norms current in al-Tirmidhī's time. This type of synthesis is rare and highly significant. It speaks to why al-Tirmidhī's legacy may have been preserved in such entirety. His ideas were seen as valuable by his contemporaries among the scholarly establishment. We will see in Chapter 3 how al-Tirmidhī's impact was felt beyond the boundaries of Islamic mysticism as his thought played an important role in the development of the Ḥanafī/Mātūrīdī theological tradition.

Conclusion

In this chapter we discussed the contours of *ḥikma* (wisdom) among a diverse set of historical figures before and after al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmdhī. Understanding his episteme has helped us to identify his important contribution to the concept of *ḥikma* and how it serves to frame our knowledge of *walāya*, a topic we will address in Chapter 5. His relatively untapped and misunderstood work, *KH* has provided us with a new basis for evaluating his gnoseology as it is colored by Hellenistic antecedents. It is clear that al-Tirmidhī was not merely borrowing vague elements of this Hellenistic culture but must have studied Greek medicine and some form of Pythagoreanism, possibly through pythagorean literature available in his time. This was not simply a blind imitation of Greek heritage, but a means of using that heritage to support his doctrine of *walāya* (sainthood). The implications of this finding pose new questions about the possible relationship between al-Tirmidhī's ideas and later concepts of sainthood and sanctification found in the writings of other Muslim mystics such as Ibn ʿArabī, who relied heavily on Al-Tirmidhī as an inspiration for his work. Even more thought provoking is the

possibility of a non-dual framework for sainthood based on a particular conceptualization of *ḥikma* in terms of opposites and the understanding that the *walī* is someone who passes beyond these dualities in his direct contemplation and intimate conversation with God. Al-Tirmidhī's non-dual framework leads us to see the possibility of a Buddhist influence, which is not unrealistic given that al-Tirmidhī's birthplace and residence was once a center of Buddhism in Transoxania on the eve of the Islamic conquests. Indian Buddhism specifically seeks to move beyond a dualistic concept of the world and perceives the ultimate non-duality of consciousness as distinct from the natural world. Also significant in al-Tirmidhī's synthesis is the way he combined and juxtaposed textual knowledge with both knowledge of the natural world and knowledge bequeathed directly from God. Al-Tirmidhī takes an important position in this regard about the place of 'science' with respect to religious learning and inspiration.

Chapter 3

The Theological Significance of *Walāya*

Previous scholarship on al-Tirmidhī has not appreciated the extent of al-Tirmidhī's debt to the Ḥanafī theological tradition. This chapter seeks to establish al-Tirmidhī's connection to this discourse stream and explain how some of its basic assumptions inform his doctrine of sainthood. Not only was al-Tirmidhī influenced by Ḥanafī theology, but he played an important role in the development of the later Ḥanafī School. Al-Tirmidhī's more egalitarian approach to sainthood clearly stems from his Ḥanafī theological background with its tradition of inclusiveness and its expansive definition of belief.

Al-Tirmidhī's Scholarly Background

The current research on al-Tirmidhī (Bernd Radtke, Yves Marquet, Sara Sviri, Geneviève Gobillot, ʿAbdallāh Barakat, et al.) has not adequately dealt with his audience. As was stated in the previous chapter, al-Tirmidhī is often portrayed as an outlier, someone whose ideas were unique, ahead of his time, and who may have spawned a movement, the Hakīmiyya.[229] This perception of al-Tirmidhī depicts him primarily as a mystic. Since Islamic mysticism found its systematization under scholars such as al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī in the 5th- Islamic century (11th-century C.E.), historians have frequently used the biographical dictionary of al-Sulamī as a

[229] Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Hujwīrī (d. 465–469/1072–1077) mentions the Ḥakīmiyya in his treatise on Sufism *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* along with eleven other Ṣūfī sects. Only the Malāmatiyya (The People of Blame) are found in other supporting texts giving the impression that Hujwīrī's discussion around these 'sects' may be more of an attempt to classify various trends in Sufism during his time according to what he sees as ideological viewpoints rather than the presence of actual 'schools.' This may also be an example of a later trend that projects schools (*madhāhib*) back onto the major figures of early Islam who are styled as eponyms. For more on al-Hujwīrī see Hosain's article "Hujwīrī" in *EI2*.

point of departure in order to understand the early figures of many proto-Ṣūfī mystical movements such as the Baghdād School, the Basran School and the Khurāsānian School.[230] Mystical movements of the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.) had not yet developed an identity that was socially accepted, hence both al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī escape persecution primarily because they can claim juristic credentials.[231] If such mystical movements were indeed too nascent to expect a larger audience of mystics whom their writings were targeting, it may be that we need to look elsewhere to situate them historically. The issue of audience is critical for us to situate al-Tirmidhī and to interpret his ideas. In Chapter 2 we showed that *ḥikma* represented a broadly accepted approach to knowledge and a discourse that al-Tirmidhī was a part of. We also saw how the term *ḥikma* represented a widely accepted gnoseology from the 8th- to the early 10th-century C.E., after which time the same term became associated with Greek knowledge in its Aristotelian and Neoplatonic forms. While *ḥikma* was not represented in the basic episteme outlined by Rosenthal, theology (Kalām) certainly is one of his categories. It makes sense then to look at the discourse stream that supports this knowledge-type in al-Tirmidhī's context. In Khurāsān and Transoxania Ḥanafism had become widespread by the middle of the 3rd- Islamic

[230] See Chapter Six of Knysh's (2010) *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* titled, "The Systematization of the Ṣūfī Tradition" for further discussion of the period of systematization of Sufism in Khurāsān during the 4th- and 5th-Islamic centuries.

[231] According to Gramlich and van Ess, al-Junayd escaped the Miḥna of Ghulām Khalīl (d. 275/888) by claiming to be a jurisprudent (*faqīh*). For more on al-Junayd and the effect of the Miḥna on the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād in the 9th-century C.E. see Knysh's (2010) *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, p. 62. During the same general time period al-Tirmidhī faced persecution from certain local scholars in his town of Tirmidh for discoursing on the topic of love, nearly the same accusation leveled at the Ṣūfī mystics of Baghdād during the Miḥna of Ghulām Khalīl. Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370) relates from al-Sulamī that when al-Tirmidhī was summoned to Balkh on account of these accusations of heresy he escaped persecution on account of his conformance to the *madhhab* of the scholars of that city. Al-Subkī's words are *fa-jāʾa ilā Balkh fa-qabilūhu bi-sabab muwāfaqatihi iyyāhum ʿalā al-madhhab*, "He went to Balkh and they accepted him because of his conformance to them with regards to their school." We know that al-Tirmidhī was a Ḥanafī (See Radtke and O'Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism*, p. 15) and it is likely that the Hanafīs of Balkh supported him against his detractors. Thus we can see that like al-Junayd, al-Tirmidhī escapes persecution through his ability to claim a relation to a particular school of law. For al-Junayd it was the school of Abū Thawr and for al-Tirmidhī it was the school of Abū Ḥanīfa.

century (9th-century C.E.) in both legal and theological discourses among the scholarly elite.[232] Muʿtazilī theology was more widely represented than Traditionalism among Ḥanafīs in Khurāsān at this time. Thus, it is important to emphasize that when we refer to Ḥanafī theology we mean the discourse stream that was connected to works such as *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I* and other texts that we will address later in this chapter.

When reading entries on al-Tirmidhī in *EIr* and in Brill's *EI2* one may question whether we are even dealing with the same individual. Marquet classifies al-Tirmidhī as a traditionalist who is against philosophy and Kalām[233] while Radtke, on the other hand, classifies him rather ambiguously as a theosophist, borrowing ideas from both Shiʿī and gnostic speculation.[234] Neither of these views clearly situates al-Tirmidhī within his scholarly milieu nor addresses the audience for whom al-Tirmidhī was writing. In his dissertation on al-Tirmidhī, Radtke provides more detail on al-Tirmidhī's background. He acknowledges that al-Tirmidhī's early background was Ḥanafī, however, he denies that Ḥanafī jurisprudence or theology had any serious effect on his thought.[235] For Radtke, al-Tirmidhī's Ḥanafī background is only one of many sources that al-Tirmidhī used to develop a unique synthesis that became his own. While there is some credence to this approach it does not explore the extent to which al-Tirmidhī is indebted to the Ḥanafī theological tradition. Radtke's approach to Ḥanafī theology perceives tradition in rather static terms, similar to the way he portrays other theological movements such as the Muʿtazilīs and Ashʿarīs.[236] Part of the challenge in dealing with Ḥanafī theology is that it has generally been

[232] For more on Ḥanafism in eastern Khurāsān see Madelung, Wilferd. "The early Murjiʾa in Khurāsān and Transoxania and the spread of Ḥanafism." *Der Islam.* 59 (1): 32–39. 1982.
[233] Ibid. "Ḥakīm Termedī," *EIr*.
[234] Ibid. "al-Tirmidhī," *EI2*.
[235] Ibid. *Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmiḏī: Ein Islamischer Theosoph*, p. 80.
[236] Citing Madelung and Gardet, Radtke makes the relation of works (*aʿmāl*) to belief (*imān*) an important point of distinction between the Ḥanafīs and the Muʿtazilīs. However, when we look at Ḥanafī theological works of the 3rd/9th-centuries C.E. we find that this distinction breaks down, with Ḥanafīs adopting the view that belief itself is a type of "work". Abū Muṭīʿ al-Nasafī (d. 318/930), the main spokesman of Hanafī theology prior to al-Māturīdī,

overshadowed by Ashʿarism in the study of Islamic theology.[237] The study of Ḥanafī theology has mostly focused on the early texts of the school such as *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I, al-Fiqh al-Absaṭ* and *al-ʿĀlim wa-l-Mutaʿallim*.[238] Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 332–336/943–947), after whom the Ḥanafī school was later named, has only recently been studied closely by Mustafa Ceriç.[239] Nevertheless, a more nuanced discussion of al-Māturīdī and his relationship to the later Ḥanafī theological school that bears his name has yet to be elucidated.

Major Texts of the Ḥanafī Theological Tradition

Most studies of Ḥanafī theology begin with Arent Jan Wensinck's *Muslim Creed*. Wensinck evaluated three foundational texts in Ḥanafī theology, *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar I, Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* and *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*. The first of these texts is attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa[240] while the second is narrated as if it is from Abū Ḥanīfa but, according to Wensinck, probably

claims that belief itself is a "work" in his *Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā al-Bidaʿ*. See Bernand, Marie. *Le Kitāb al-Radd ʿAlā al-Bidaʿ d'Abū Muṭīʿ Makḥūl al-Nasafī*. 1980, p. 118. It is understandable that Radtke would generalize about the general positions of particular schools, however to say that al-Tirmidhī was following the Muʿtazilīs in particular on this point of doctrine is not accurate.

[237] Jackson, Sherman A. *Islam and Problem of Black Suffering*. Oxford University Press, New York. 2009, p. 102.

[238] Wensinck provides an important analysis of the early texts of the Ḥanafī theological school in the *The Muslim Creed*. His discussion revolves around creedal texts that were ascribed to Abū Ḥanīfa such as *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I, Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* and what Wensinck calls *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*, a more advanced creedal text that is sometimes attributed to Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī but which is most probably the work of Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 373/983). Schacht discusses an early Murjiʿī text *al-ʿĀlim wa l-Mutaʿallim* attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa through the *riwāya* of Abū Muqātil al-Samarqandī (d. 208/823) although Schacht argues that Abū Muqātil was the original author of the text. According to Schacht this text reflects the theological milieu of the 2nd Islamic century (8th-century C.E.). Schacht's discussion of early Murjiʾī and Ḥanafī *Kalām* does not go beyond al-Māturīdī. In *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* Wilferd Madelung discusses the historical importance of the early Ḥanafī theological school up to Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī in as it appears in the eastern Islamic lands, however, his discussion is more historical and does not touch upon the positions of the later school. Gardet (1956) discusses faith amongst the various early sects of Islam distinguishing between early Murjīʿism and the Ḥanafī-Maturidī school, however he doesn't discuss Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114) or the later Ḥanafī-Māturīdī scholars after him such as Maḥmūd b. Zayd al-Lāmishī (d. 539/1144). Claude Gilliot goes the furthest in outlining some of the positions of the later Māturīdī School but is still very general, giving preference to authors of the Ashʿarī School after al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) a contemporary of Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī.

[239] Ceriç, Mustafa. *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944)*. Kuala Lumpur. International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization. 1995.

[240] Both Wensinck and Schacht demonstrate that *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I* represents most closely what we can assume to be some of the original creedal teachings of Abū Ḥanīfa. See Wensinck. *The Muslim Creed*, p. 187.

originated sometime between the time of Abū Ḥanīfa and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.[241] The third is often attributed to Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī though Joseph Schacht prefers Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 373/983). According to Wensinck, the first two texts that represent an earlier stage within the school are polemical and primarily attempt to refute the positions of other movements. Both *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I* and the *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* are thought to have originated around the latter half of the 8th-century C.E. *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar II* discusses more advanced aspects of *Kalām* and follows a format that resembles an organized creed, with two sections devoted to the two parts of the Muslim testification of faith (*shahāda*). Wensinck is not so interested in following the development of the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī School in its fullest extent since he does not show how the creed continued to develop in the Ḥanafī school, after the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.), but moves on to discuss al-Ashʿarī, al-Juwaynī[242] and al-Ghazālī in their development of Muslim *Kalām*.[243] While there is some overlap between the Ashʿarī and al-Māturīdī schools of theology, this overlap primarily occurs much later in the 14th-century C.E. with Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 791/1390). The Māturīdī School is often portrayed as a pale shadow of the Ashʿarī School. This is unfortunate because the premises and points of doctrine of the Māturīdī School represent a middle ground between Muʿtazilī *Kalām* and Ashʿarī *Kalām*. One of the main authors of the later Māturīdī School, Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1115) in his *Tabṣirat al-Adilla,* shows a high level of sophistication in his argumentation, but does not follow al-Ghazālī and the Ashʿarī model in adopting an Aristotelian framework.[244] While Wensinck's model for the early development of the creed is accurate for the early Murjiʾī-Ḥanafī School, it is

[241] Wensinck, A. *The Muslim creed: its genesis and historical development.* London: F. Cass. 1965.
[242] (d. 478/1085)
[243] The general trend in studies of early Islamic theology is to focus on eastern theologians after al-Ashʿarī leaving the later Ḥanafī-Māturīdī school almost completely neglected.
[244] Claude Gilliot only briefly mentions Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī in his treatment of the Ḥanafī theological tradition.

not precise enough to help us situate al-Tirmidhī within this tradition. We propose filling out Wensinck's model by adding an additional stage between the *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* and *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*.

Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī is considered the eponym of the Māturīdī School but his thought clearly builds upon earlier texts in the eastern Ḥanafī tradition.[245] By the early 5th- Islamic century (11th-century C.E.) the Māturīdī School had produced texts of depth and sophistication far exceeding that of *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*. Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī's *Tabṣirat al-Adilla* was a monumental work establishing the position of the Ḥanafī School within the larger context of philosophy and theology.[246] His student Maḥmūd b. Zayd al-Lāmishī (d. 539/1144) wrote a mid-sized work, *al-Tamhīd,* which demonstrated the extent of that sophistication. One possible reason that al-Tirmidhī's connection to the Ḥanafī School has not been thoroughly explored is because most studies in Hanafī theology deal with either early texts attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa or to later texts by al-Māturīdī and post-Māturīdī scholars. Two Ḥanafī theological works that date just prior to al-Māturīdī that are coterminous with the life of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī are *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*[247] by al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī[248] and *Kitab al-Radd ʿalā al-Bidaʿ* by Abū Mutīʿ al-Nasafī (d. 318/930), both texts dating approximately toward the end of the 9th-century C.E. and possibly the very early part of the 10th-century C.E.[249]

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[245] Gilliot, Claude. "La théologie musulmane en Asie centrale et au Khorasan." *Arabica*, T. 49, Fasc. 2 (Apr., 2002), p. 154.

[246] Abū Muʿīn an-Nasafī is also responding to Ashʿarism in his *Tabṣirat al-Adilla*. *Ibid. La théologie musulmane*, p. 161.

[247] Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī's *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* is also found under the title *Al-Radd ʿalā Aṣḥāb al-Ahwā'* and was translated early on into Persian. The copies that have reached us contain a high degree of variation in wording. The manuscript of *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* that I obtained from the British Museum Or. 12781 differs significantly in wording from the printed 1837 Bulaq edition.

[248] Despite the current death date of al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī (d. 342/953), we have an approximate date for the authoring of his work *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* since we know that it was commissioned by the Samānid ruler Ismāʿīl b. Aḥmad (279–295/892–907) at the end of the 9th-century C.E. *Ibid. The Muslim Creed*, p. 30.

[249] *Ibid. La théologie musulmane*, p. 154. Keith Lewinstein provides the date of 290/902 for the authorship of *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam.* Lewinstein, Keith. "Notes on Eastern Ḥanafite Heresiography." Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 114, No. 4 (Oct. – Dec., 1994), p. 588. Both Sezgin and Schacht assume that *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* was

While Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*[250] appears about the same time or just after the works of al-Samarqandī and al-Nasafī, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* represents a new departure for Ḥanafī theology as described in the words of Claude Gilliot, "avec lui (al-Māturīdī) commence la théologie dialectique en Transoxiane." The works of both al-Samarqandī and al-Nasafī summarize and codify ideas that had developed over the previous century within the school and thus are representative of ideas that were formed prior to the 9th-century C.E. Not only was al-Tirmidhī heir to these ideas but, as we will show, was an important figure in the transition from the creedal stage of Ḥanafī theology to the dialectical stage that has become associated with al-Māturīdī.

The Development of Ḥanafī Theology

As was stated previously, the first Ḥanafī theological texts such as *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I* and *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* deal mainly with interfaith polemics. Hence, the beginning words of *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* are, *al-īmān iqrār^{un} bi-l-lisān wa-taṣdīq^{un} bi-l-janān*, that is, "Belief is confessing with the tongue and attesting with the heart."[251] This creedal statement addresses Khārijī notions that equate actions with belief.[252] The definition of belief just mentioned

authored after al-Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* and that it was the first work in that tradition, however *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* shows no signs of al-Māturīdī's influence there being no mention of *ḥikma* as an overarching principle, nor does *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* align to the new creedal structure that al-Māturīdī inaugurates that distinguished between *ilāhiyyāt*, points of doctrine on Godhood, and *nubuwwāt*, doctrines relating to prophecy. If *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* was indeed part of al-Māturīdī's school it would surely have incorporated at least some of these elements. Finally, the date of authorship of *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* suggested by Lewinstein makes it more probably that *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* was authored either before or at nearly the same time as al-Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. It seems that the motivation to place *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* after *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* may derive from the death date of al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī falling after that of al-Māturīdī, however death dates are notoriously difficult to prove accurately especially when dealing with contemporaries or near contemporaries in this time period.

[250] Despite there being some discussion over the authenticity of the sole surviving manuscript of *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* as belonging to al-Māturīdī by Michel Allard (1967) and J. Meric Passagno (1984), both Gimaret (1980) and Özervarlı (1997) consider *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* to be authentic after a comparison of the book with various passages quoted from it in Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī's *Tabṣirat al-Adilla*.

[251] Ibid. *The Muslim Creed*, p. 125

[252] Also see Madelung's discussion of early Ḥanafī theological polemics and their relation to politics in *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran*, p. 15.

eventually becomes foundational to the Ḥanafī School, but, as we will see, is not left uncontested. Most of the creedal statements in *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* attempt to take a medial position with respect to some point of theological controversy in the first part of the 2nd- Islamic century (8th-century C.E.). For example, one article in *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* states that belief neither increases nor decreases. This again becomes a basic element of the Ḥanafī creed. This follows from the Murjiʾī doctrine of faith that sought to close the door on accusations of unbelief (*takfīr*) that were associated with various movements such as the Khārijīs and the extremist (*ghulāt*) Shīʿīs. The various statements of these early creeds do not have any logical ordering, but rather stake out positions in relation to Khārijī, Murjiʾī, Qadarī, Jabrī, Jahmī, Shīʿī and Muʿtazilī sympathies.[253] If we compare the contents of *Waṣiyyat Abī Ḥanīfa* and *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I*, representing the early stage up to the end of the 2nd- Islamic century (8th-century C.E.), to those of *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*, representing the creed at the end of the 4th-Islamic century (10th-century C.E.), we find many of the same creedal elements with some important new additions. *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar II* discusses four new elements above and beyond what we find in *al-Fiqh al-Akbar I*, which are: saints and their relation to prophets, the controversy of love and its relation to antinomianism, the division between attributes and essence with respect to the Godhead and finally the Aristotelian concept of body, essence and accident.[254] When we look at the two texts that we claim represent a medial stage in the development of early Ḥanafī theology, *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* and *Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā al-Bidaʿ*, as it was expressed in the 9th-century C.E. in Khurāsān and Transoxania, we only find mention of the first three of the four elements that distinguish *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II* from the earlier Ḥanafī texts. The Aristotelian body-essence-accident concept

[253] Ibid, p. 131. These are examples of early religious and political movements in Islam that were eventually considered heretical by the majority Sunnī heresiographical tradition.
[254] Ibid, pp. 188–197.

appears to enter Ḥanafī theology with the arrival of al-Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. When looking at al-Tirmidhī's works we also find discussions on the role of love, the position of saints vis-à-vis prophets and the role of attributes in describing the Godhead. We do not, however, find the Aristotelian notion of body-essence-accident that appears in al-Māturīdī's work. Al-Tirmidhī's non-dual approach to *walāya* actually runs directly counter to Aristotle's fundamental notion of the excluded middle. The Greek Hellenic elements found in al-Tirmidhī's works emanate from the remnants of the Hellenistic mystical and philosophical heritage that permeated the scholarly culture in Khurāsān and Transoxania at that time.[255] Within a scholarly and cultural milieu such as this, it is unlikely that al-Tirmidhī was not aware of Aristotle as Radtke assumes. It is probable that al-Tirmidhi consciously chose to avoid some aspects of Aristotelianism while giving preference for Pythagoreanism and Lettrism.[256] Even throughout the translation movement in Baghdād during the first part of the 9th-century C.E. Arab Muslims consciously chose to translate scientific and philosophical works, but eschewed Greek literature such as the plays of Aristophanes and the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer. This may have been because Abbasid culture already prided itself in its own literary tradition. Nevertheless, we can assume that al-Tirmidhī was making a conscious choice with respect to the various elements he wanted to

[255] For more on the relationship between Al-Tirmidhī and Greek philosophy see Chapter 2. Radtke posits that al-Tirmidhī's thought represents an old Islamic theosophy very different than the new Islamic theosophy of Suhrawardī and Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240). According to Radtke, it was not until al-Farābī (d. 339/950) and Ibn Sīna (d. 428/1037) that Aristotelian philosophy and Neoplatonism made its mark on Islamic mystical thought. See Radtke's *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism*, p. 7. If we look, however, at contemporaries of al-Tirmidhī such as Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933–934) and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/923 or 323/935) we find individuals for whom Aristotelian thought and Neoplatonic ideas were not unknown. *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* also demonstrates that al-Tirmidhī was closely aware of Galenic humorism. In Chapter 2 we showed how al-Tirmidhī's thought corresponds closely to various aspects of Pythagorean cosmology. We also showed how the juxtaposition of the *ḥakīm* to the *ṭabīb* (physician) in al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* relates to the Pythagorean notion of macrocosm versus microcosm. The *ḥakīm* understands the macrocosm through his understanding of the opposites in the world just as the physician understands the human body or the microcosm through the four opposites of hot, cold, wet and dry.

[256] Lettrism is a cosmological movement in Islam and Jewish Kabala that views the world as originally composed of letters spoken by God in the creation of the universe. For al-Tirmidhī the Arabic letters represent the key to understanding the roots of words and thus the sources of created things as they were uttered by God in the primordial language of Arabic.

include in his many works. For al-Tirmidhī this was often dictated by inspiration. For example, he records in his autobiography that he ceased his study of Zodiac because he received inspiration from God that this was beneath his spiritual level.

Al-Tirmidhī's Ḥanafī Credentials

Al-Tirmidhī's episteme leads us to look more closely at the Hanafi theological tradition and the study of this discourse stream has uncovered several texts that correspond closely to al-Tirmidhī's time period and the topics of his thought. Now we will more closely examine how al-Tirmidhī's theological views correspond to ideas within *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* and *Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā al-Bidaʿ*. Before that, however, we will review al-Tirmidhī's educational background and what others have said about his relationship to the Ḥanafī tradition.

Al-Ḥujwīrī relates in *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* that al-Tirmidhī had studied Fiqh with one of the close companions of Abū Ḥanīfa.[257] While this is improbable given the distance in time between the death of Abū Ḥanīfa and the birth of al-Tirmidhī, it is not impossible that he could have studied Fiqh (*ʿilm al-raʾy*) with one of the students of the students of Abū Ḥanīfa. Radtke mentions that al-Tirmidhī was born to a "theological" family[258] sometime between 220 and 230 A.H. (835 and 845 C.E.) in the city of Tirmidh. He studied *ʿilm al-raʾy* and *ʿilm al-āthār* from a young age.[259] According to Radtke, the reference to *ʿilm al-raʾy* in his autobiography clearly indicates his relationship to Ḥanafī Fiqh, which was prevalent in the eastern Islamic lands at the time.[260] In a passage from *al-Rasāʾil al-Maknūna*, al-Tirmidhī harshly criticizes the students of

[257] ʿAlī b. ʿUthmān, al-Hujwīrī. *The Kashf al-Mahjúb: the oldest Persian treatise on Sufism.* New ed., London. Luzac. 1970, p. 141
[258] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 1. Also, Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 1.
[259] Ibid, p. 1
[260] Ibid, p. 15.

Abū Ḥanīfa while remaining respectfully silent about Abū Ḥanīfa himself.[261] Despite his scathing criticism, the passage belies al-Tirmidhī's intimate knowledge of early Ḥanafī jurisprudence and its major proponents:

> *Fanẓur ilā ʿilmihim al-ladhi qayyaduhu fi kutubihim min ʿulūm al-aḥkām aḥsabuhu yaqaʿ fī akthar min alfi jild*[in] *li-Abī Ḥanīfa raḥimahullāh wa-amma li-Abī Yūsuf wa-kutub Zufar wa Asad wa-l-Luʾluʾī wa Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan fa-hal tarā fī shayʾ*[in] *minhā dhakara al-mīʿād wa-ṣifāt al-janna wa-l-nār … fa ahl al-raʾy fi khuluwwin min hādha al-ʿilmi kullihi innama istimāʿuhum bi-l-ādhān wa fikrihim bi-l-qulūb fī khuṣūmāt al-nufūs wa-sharruhum wa-makruhum wa khidaʿuhum wa-khiyānatuhum mā yūjib al-ḥukmu ʿalayhim fi dhālik wa-ma yaḥillu lahum wa-mā yaḥrumu ʿalayhim.*[262]
>
> Look at their knowledge, the rulings of which they have written down in their books. I would estimate it to be found in over a thousand volumes attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa, God have mercy on him. As for Abū Yūsuf and the books of Zufar, Asad, Luʾluʾī and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, do you see in any of them, [have they] mentioned the Next Life or the description of Paradise and Hell? .... So, *Ahl al-Raʾy* (the Ḥanafīs) are devoid of all of this. Their hearing is only with their ears, their thinking with their hearts is only the bickering of souls, and their evil, devising, deceit and treachery require a judgment against them in all of those things as well as what is permissible for them and what is forbidden for them.

It is evident that al-Tirmidhī's early education was Ḥanafī and that later in his career he would respond to what he saw as deficiencies in the approach of Ḥanafī jurisprudence. Al-Tirmidhī not only criticized scholars of Ḥanafī law but also Hanafī/Murjiʾī theology as well. In the beginning

[261] Elsewhere al-Tirmidhī considers Abū Ḥanīfa to be a scholar of the outward (*ʿulamā' al-ẓāhir*) and not a scholar of the inward (*ʿulamā' al-bāṭin*). *Ibid. Al-Ḥakīm Al-Tirmidhī wa-naẓarīyatih*, p. 90.
[262] Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, M. b. ʿAlī. *Al-Masā'il al-Maknūna*. Ms. Leipzig. Folio 3B-4A in *Al-Ḥakīm Al-Tirmidhī wa-naẓarīyatih Fī Al-wilāyah*, p. 95.

of al-Tirmidhī's *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* (*Khatm al-Awliyāʾ*) he addresses his audience directly. Speaking as if to a student asking a question, al-Tirmidhī responds:

> *Wa dhakarta anna nāsan yaqūlūna inna al-wilāyata majhulat^{un} ʿinda ahlihā wa man ḥasiba nafsahu waliyy^{an} fahuwa baʿīd^{un} minhā. Faʿlam anna hāʾulaʾī al-ladhīna yakhuḍūna fī hādha al-kalām laysū min hādha l-amr fī shayʾ. Innamā hum qawmun yaʿtabirūna shaʾn al-wilāyati min ṭarīq al-ʿilm wa-yatakallamūna bi-l-maqāyīs wa-l-ẓunūn wa-bi-l-tawahhumi min anfusihim.*
>
> You mentioned there are some people who say that sainthood is unknown to its people and whoever considers himself to be a saint is far from being so. Know that those who delve into this discourse are not a party to this affair. They are a people who consider sainthood to be from a type of outward knowledge and they discuss it through methods and guesswork and through delusion from themselves.[263]

Sainthood was a topic consistently addressed by the Ḥanafī theologians as we will see in more detail later. Al-Tirmidhī's use of the word "*Kalām*" here and "*yatakallamūna*" indicates an address towards theologians. This is based on al-Tirmidhī's use of the same wording to warn the traveler on the path of *maʿrifa* about the "*mutakallim*" in his *KH*. There, al-Tirmidhī uses an analogy to describe the true reality of the human being's dependence upon God at all times, inwardly and outwardly. Al-Tirmidhī likens the reliance of the human being on God to someone held dangling in the air by a hand. Were the hand to let go for an instant, the one being held would perish.[264] In this way, the world, like the air, does not support the person. In truth, only God is the real support. He uses this analogy in order to emphasize a disposition he sees lacking in the theologian. For al-Tirmidhī, the theologian suffers from arrogance because he thinks he

[263] Ibid. *Drei Schriften*, vol. 1, p. 1.
[264] Ibid. *Kitāb al-ḥikma*, fol. 7r.

can describe God in his own terms. After this parable al-Tirmidhī uses the following words to warn his reader about the pitfalls of Kalām:

> *Thumma an yakhluṣa min āfāti al-kalām fa inna al-mutakallima muqaddirun li-mā yuftī bi-hā al-malik wa-muqtadir li-taqdīr umūrihi wa tadbīr aʿmālihi fa-kayfa yajtarī an yuqaddira aw yahtadiya aw yudabbira min aʿmālihi ʿalā miqdār ʿazamatihi wa-mulkihi wa-kayfa yarā nafsahu yuṣliḥ lidhālik.*[265]
>
> Then he must desist from the pitfalls of *Kalām*, for the *mutakallim* (theologian) estimates what the king himself decrees and estimates in order to assess his affairs and consider his actions – so how is it that he should presume to estimate or be correct, or think about any of his (the king's) actions to the extent of what is due to him (he king) in terms of his (the king's) greatness and his dominion and how should he (the theologian) see himself capable of that?

Despite al-Tirmidhī's harsh criticism of the theologian (*mutakallim*), his works demonstrate that he is not completely opposed to Kalām. On the following page of his *KH* he counsels the "*mutakallim*" (theologian) to take his "*Kalām*" from God and to consider what God manifests on his tongue before he begins to speak about matters related to God.[266] For al-Tirmidhī, Kalām spoils *ḥikma* because it circumvents the process of 'knowing God through spirituality' through its emphasis of 'knowing God through the intellect'. As we shall see later in this chapter, not all Kalām is problematic for al-Tirmidhī, but mainly the aspect of it that speculates abstractly about the nature of God. Other aspects of Kalām are upheld by al-Tirmidhī such as the idea of God having a particular number of attributes, discussion about the nature of belief and its relationship to acts, as well as the discipline of heresiography. Also, when we look at al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*, it is deeply colored by his theological background. This can only be the case for

[265] Ibid, fol. 7r.
[266] Ibid, fol. 7r.

someone who at a very young age studied traditional Ḥanafī Fiqh and Kalām by rote memorization as al-Tirmidhī has indicated in his autobiography.

Al-Tirmidhī's criticism of the practitioners of Fiqh and Kalām in his time points to his sense of independence and to the still fluid nature of the discourse stream around legal and theological doctrines in his milieu. It would be incorrect, however, to state that al-Tirmidhī was a Traditionalist, as Marquet claims, or that he adopted Muʿtazilī views, as does Radtke, since he condemns both of these groups in line with the standard Ḥanafī theological position of his time.[267] Rather, al-Tirmidhī is better cast as a reformer who is reacting to the way knowledge was understood and conveyed in the religious context in which he was articulating his views, a context that was predominately Ḥanafī. He clearly lived before the formalization of the schools (*madhāhib*) of law and theology that coalesced in the 4th Islamic century (10-century C.E.). Hence, identifying him as Ḥanafī is a somewhat retrospective act. If we are going to designate him as someone who belonged to the Ḥanafī theological milieu, then his ideas should conform generally to the texts of that school both before him and after him and he should be in conversation with its basic precepts. Furthermore, the later Ḥanafī tradition should claim him in some way. We will now demonstrate how both of these hypotheses can be verified with respect to al-Tirmidhī.

Al-Tirmidhī's Ḥanafī Theology

Radtke states that al-Tirmidhī follows the Muʿtazilī position with respect to particular aspects of belief (*īmān*) since al-Tirmidhī constantly stresses the point throughout his various works that belief (*īmān*) must include actions (*aʿmāl*). Radtke states, "Glaube ist daher für

[267] Ibid. *Naẓarīyatih fī al-wilāyah*, pp. 79–80.

Tirmidhī nicht nur, wie nach hanafitischer lehre, reiner bekenntnisakt, sondern, als im menshcen zure wirkung kommend, immer gleichzeitig auch äusseres tun: īmān ist zugleich auch werk (ʿ*amal*). Hierin folgt Tirmidhī den muʿtaziliten."[268] There are three problems with this analysis of al-Tirmidhī's theological views on belief. The first is that it doesn't take into account al-Tirmidhī's views on language, that is, his insistence on the non-existence of true synonyms (*mutarādifāt*). It also does not account for his audience, nor does it reflect the nuanced approach of al-Tirmidhī toward mystical discourse and teaching. On first impression, one would wonder how al-Tirmidhī could be called a Ḥanafī while contravening one of the primary precepts of the school. We have to remember again that al-Tirmidhī preceded the period of formalization of the schools of law and theology and that is why we prefer to use the term 'discourse stream' to identify a less formal and more fluid period. The Ḥanafī School of theology did not become a formal school of thought until sometime in the mid to late 4th- Islamic century (10th-century C.E.) with the advent of al-Māturīdī's *Kitab al-Tawḥīd*. Before al-Māturīdī we have a great deal of diversity among Ḥanafīs in terms of their theological viewpoints. One of the reasons that al-Tirmidhī insists that belief must include works (*aʿmāl*) is because he seeks to differentiate the word belief (*īmān*) from submission (*islām*). Since there are no true synonyms according to al-Tirmidhī, belief (*īmān*) and submission (*islām*) cannot be the same thing.[269] In a sense, al-Tirmidhī is trying to elevate the use of the word belief (*īmān*) to conform to what he sees as the true use of this word as it is articulated in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth.

Furthermore, al-Tirmidhī has a specific audience in mind for certain of his works. In his *Kitab Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* al-Tirmidhī engages in a conversation with one of his students and the

[268] Ibid. *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmiḏī: ein islamischer theosoph*, p. 81.
[269] Al-Tirmidhī's work *Al-Furūq wa-Manʿ al-Tarāduf* sets out to demonstrate how various terms that are thought to be synonymous are actually different in meaning. The idea of the non-existence of true synonyms is an idea that later becomes a part of Ḥanafī Uṣūl (Methodology).

book is organized in terms of a dialog. For example, an unnamed speaker asks the question, "What is the firmest handhold?" Al-Tirmidhī responds, "It is fitter for me to speak about it when I find the right situation because it is *ḥikmat al-ḥikma*!" The student replies, "Give us a chance, consider [the matter] out of concern [for us]!" Al-Tirmidhī answers, "Yes, ask out of your poverty to your Lord!" The student then asks again, "What is the firmest handhold?" At this point, al-Tirmidhī relents and proceeds to answer the question.[270] Since al-Tirmidhī's works often have a pedagogical value for those whom he considered his students, he emphasizes a more rigorous definition of belief than that accorded by the theologians who are defining belief for a wider audience. In other words, to be a really 'true believer' (as an aspirant to the path of *maʿrifa* or gnosis) one must demonstrate one's beliefs through action. Al-Tirmidhī does not give ordinary Muslims the title *muʾminūn* (believers), rather, he uses a term used in Ḥanafī theological texts to refer to ordinary believers, which is, *muwaḥḥidūn* (those who have testified to God's unity).[271] Hence, al-Tirmidhī does consider such persons to be Muslims and in that respect does not contravene the Ḥanafī theological position, which states that a Muslim is anyone who simply confesses to the faith on the tongue (*iqrārun bi-l-lisān*) and testifies in the heart (*taṣdīqun bi-l-qalb*). Al-Tirmidhī does, however, depart from the Ḥanafīs of his time when he describes belief (*īmān*) to be a higher stage than *islām* (submission and entrance into the faith). This Ḥanafī tradition still equates belief (*īmān*) with submission (*islām*). Al-Tirmidhī demonstrates this point in his *NU* as follows:

> *Hāʾulāʾi qawm*^{un} *muwaḥḥidūn waḥḥadū Allāha bi-alsinatihim wa-qulūbihim wa-ḍayyaʿū al-ʿubūdata … fa-inna min ḥaqqi Allāh ʿalā al-ʿibādi an yaʿbuduh … fa-l-ʿubūdatu al-ẓahiratu taḥqīq*^{un} *li-mā fī al-bāṭin.*

[270] Ibid. *Drei Schriften*, p. 72.
[271] This is to be distinguished from the use of *muwaḥḥidūn* in the central lands of Islamdom during the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.), which used the term to refer to a high rank of believer.

> Those are a people who confess the unity of God. They have testified to God's unity with their tongues and with their hearts but have lost the essence of worship… for it is the right of God over his servants that they worship him…and outward worship is the realization of what is found inwardly.

The *muwaḥḥidūn* are those who profess outwardly with their tongues and believe inwardly in their hearts but do not necessarily do anything else that would distinguish them as Muslims.[272] According to al-Tirmidhī, these *muwaḥḥidūn* are the ones who will enter Hell and then eventually leave it to enter Paradise, in contradistinction to the *muʾminūn* (believers). This position necessitates a response by al-Tirmidhī to the prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) that states that the *shahāda* (statement of confession) is itself weighty enough to enter someone into Paradise. Al-Tirmidhī interprets this *ḥadīth* by saying that the statement of confession referred to in this *ḥadīth* is the confession that happens just before death, since at death a person's heart is not connected to worldly matters and is thus able to make a sincere and pure confession.[273] It is evident here that al-Tirmidhī's positions with respect to belief (*īmān*) are in conversation with the theological tradition of his time. Although some of his positions on theological and creedal matters differ from the main positions of what came to be the Māturīdī school, this can be credited to his having preceded al-Māturīdī at a time when the Ḥanafī School of theology was still quite diverse and in a state of flux.

Al-Tirmidhī directly discusses another major creedal point in the Ḥanafī School, which is the controversy over whether or not belief increases or decreases. As stated earlier, all of the

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[272] The term *muwaḥḥid*, in this sense, is used by the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theologians of Khurāsān and Transoxania during from the 3rd- to 5th- Islamic centuries (9th- to 11th-centuries C.E.). See Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī's use of this term in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, p. 102. Also see Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī's (d. 508/1114) use of this term in *Tabṣirat al-Adilla*, pp. 24. The Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theologians used the term *muwaḥḥidūn* to denote a believer who merely professed the statement of confession but who was generally ignorant of the legal and theological particulars of Islam.

[273] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 1, pp. 62–63.

early Ḥanafī creeds that can be attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa and his direct students negate the idea that belief increases or decreases. This point of doctrine appears to conflict directly with a verse in Chapter Eight (*Al-Anfāl*) of the Qurʾān, which reads, "They only are the believers whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when His revelations are recited unto them they increase in their faith, and who trust in their Lord," Qurʾān [8:2].[274] Al-Tirmidhī cites this same verse in his discussion on this creedal point and then proceeds to explain his own position in relation to the increase or the decrease of belief. Al-Tirmidhī's words are quite precise and indicate his knowledge of the Ḥanafī position and his need to reconcile it with the Qurʾānic text. He states:

> *Wa min hāhuna istajāza man qāla al-īmān yāzīdu wa-kamā yāzīdu fa-innahu yanquṣu summiya al-zāʾid min al-nūr fī ṣadrihi īmān*^{an} *wa-mā naqaṣa fa-minhu yanquṣu wa-l-aṣl alladhī minhu badaʾa al-tawḥīd qāʾim*^{un} *fa-bi-aqalli al-nūr yaṣīru muwaḥḥid*^{an} *fa-iṭmaʾanna bihi.*[275]
>
> And from this, it is permissible for one to say that belief increases and just as it increases it also decreases. The light which increases in his chest is called belief, and what decreases, decreases from it (that light) but the original bit with which he started his belief in the oneness of God remains. Thus, it is with this smallest bit of light that he becomes a *muwaḥḥid*, (one who confesses to God's unity) and his heart finds repose in it.

Here, al-Tirmidhī attempts to reconcile two positions that seem contradictory.[276] From what we have seen so far the outlines of al-Tirmidhī's concept of belief are beginning to become clear. The *muwaḥḥid* is the one who confesses belief with his tongue and believes in *tawḥīd* (God's unity) with his heart. That original 'belief' is a light that God casts into the heart of the

[274] Pickthall, Marmaduke William. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. New York: Dorset Press, 1988.
[275] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 124.
[276] Ibid. *Nadhariyyatuhu*, p. 119.

muwaḥḥid. As that point of light expands, belief also expands until one becomes, as al-Tirmidhī states, *al-muʾmin al-bāligh* (a mature believer).[277] Any actual decrease in belief is a decrease from the amount of belief that exceeded that original point of light. However, that point of light itself cannot increase or decrease; it is either present or disappears completely, in which case one is no longer a Muslim. Al-Tirmidhī's use of the word "*istajāza*" (to be permissible) to refer to those who consider belief to increase and decrease indicates that he gave preference to the Ḥanafī position that belief does not increase or decrease. Hence, we find that al-Tirmidhī's definition of belief upholds the Ḥanafī position but modifies it in a unique and creative way. Al-Tirmidhī's attempt to reconcile two contradictory theological positions betrays his own active involvement in developing a theological doctrine of belief that rationalizes various points of doctrine in Islam. On the one hand, he criticizes speculative theology for what he considers to be its excesses, yet he also takes very specific theological positions in relation to the theological tradition in which he was schooled. Reconciling seemingly contradictory statements in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature is, in fact, one of the functions of the *ḥukamāʾ* according to al-Tirmidhī's approach to *ḥikma*. What disturbs al-Tirmidhī is the discourse that surrounds God's attributes and actions and how they connect or do not connect with God's essence. For al-Tirmidhī this is the blameworthy aspect of theology.

Al-Tirmidhī and Ḥanafī Theology in the 3rd- Islamic Century (9th-Century C.E.)

One of the reasons that it has been difficult to reconcile al-Tirmidhī's approach to theology is because Kalām has come to mean Islamic theology in a more general sense. When al-Tirmidhī refers to Kalām and the rational theologians (*mutakallimūn*) he does not have theology

[277] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 126.

(in the general sense) in mind. Rather, he is addressing particular groups that he sees as heretical (*ahl al-bidʿa*) who were associated with Kalām, namely the Muʿtazilīs or their early forebears. In *Nawādir al-Ūṣūl* al-Tirmidhī lists the groups who he considers *ahl al-bidʿa* (heretical groups) and these accord exactly with the main groups anathematized by the Ḥanafī School, namely the Mushabbaha, Qadariyya, Jabriyya and Jahmiyya. For al-Tirmidhī, *dīn* (religion) is something that the soul must submit to. Always taking opportunities to make linguistic connections, he relates *dīn* to the verb *dāna,* which has the meaning of abasement. In this way al-Tirmidhī connects the idea that *dīn* (religion) presumes that the *nafs* (soul) abases itself. Al-Tirmidhī then explains that God sent down a clear revelation that would leave no room for other than submission. He uses the word "*kalām*" for revelation possibly hinting that the true "*kalām*" is God's speech and not the theological speculations of the particular groups he mentions. He says, *fa anzala kalām^{an} furqān^{an} yufarriqu bayna al-haqqi wa l-bāṭil*, meaning, "So he (God) sent down a clarifying speech which divides between truth and falsehood."[278] Al-Tirmidhī does not consider the Ḥanafī theologians to come under the rubric of Kalām at all. The Ḥanafī theological school is what he considers to be the 'alternative' to the Kalām of heretical groups that he considers to have delved into matters they do not understand and who accused others of unbelief thereby. For al-Tirmidhī, the *mutakallimūn* refer primarily to the Muʿtazilī theologians.[279] In the same passage al-Tirmidhī all but identifies the Muʿtazilīs by name. He says:

> "*fa-l-zāʾighūna … tarakū al-khuḍūʿ lillāh taʿāla wa-taslīm al-nafs ilā Allāh … sudda ʿalayhim bāb al-qadar fashtaddū wa-taʿammaqū fī ṭalabihi ḥattā halakū wa-addāhum dhalika ilā an*

[278] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Nawādir al-uṣūl fī maʿrifat aḥādīth al-Rasūl*. Ed. Muṣṭafā b. Ismāʿīl Dimashqī. Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir, 1972, p. 210. We used the 1972 edition of *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* here because the reference in the 2010 edition could not be located.

[279] From the middle of the 8th-century C.E. to the middle of the 9th-century C.E. the appellation *mutakallim* was applied almost exclusively to Muʿtazilī theologians. Henrik Lagerlund. *Encyclopedia of medieval philosophy*. Dordrecht: Springer. 2010, p. 666. Also see, Adang et. al. *A Common Rationality: Muʿtazilism in Islam and Judaism*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag in Kommission. 2007.

barraʾū Allāh min qudratihi wa-sharakūhu fī mashīʾatihi ifkᵃⁿ wa-iftirāʾᵃⁿ …"[280]

> Hence, those who are astray … have left abasement to God most high and submitting the soul to God … the door of ability (*qadar*) was closed to them so they became extreme, and they delved deeply in searching for it until they perished. And this lead them to divest God of His true ability, and they co-shared with Him in His will as a lie and a conceit…"

The word "*qadar*" here, in the sense of Ahl al-Qadar (the people of *qadar*) is a term often applied to the Muʿtazilīs because it refers to their delving into the topic of the ability of humans to freely create their own actions. Al-Tirmidhī is almost being sarcastic here by saying that the door of *qadar* was closed upon them because they sought to be people of *qadar*. In other words, they were left spiritually impotent because they insisted on their own ability to freely create their own actions. Al-Tirmidhī is against Muʿtazilī theology because it attempts to understand and describe God in ways that, according to al-Tirmidhī, God does not describe himself. Ḥanafī theology in this period was creedal in nature and sought above all to find a middle position in relation to various early sects within Islam. This is how al-Tirmidhī approached theology in contrast to the speculative approach of the Muʿtazilīs of his time, although it should be noted that his incorporation of Ḥanafī theology is very subtle and easy to miss. This is because he was not primarily concerned with theology or heresiography. He was more concerned with presenting what he saw as the viable alternatives to speculative theology, which are *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *maʿrifa* (gnosis). As we discussed in the previous chapter, *ḥikma* entails 'reading' (or seeing and intuiting) the world through its opposites.[281] In this respect al-Tirmidhī is actually saying that the

[280] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 180.

[281] Umberto Eco describes the Hermetic approach to reading the world as 'text' in *The Limits of Interpretation*. Eco argues that Renaissance attempts to interpret the world were based on seeing order in the world as a product of resemblances between the microcosm and the macrocosm. This approach is similar to al-Tirmidhi's concept of hikma and further points to an underlying source in Greek Hermetic thought that informed both traditions. Eco, Umberto. *The limits of interpretation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1994, pp. 23–26.

mystic is one who must strive to understand God through the world as another type of 'revelation.' We should not forget that much of western science and the impetus to understand the natural world grew out of a belief among Deists of the 18th-century C.E. that Nature was a manifestation of God's true revelation.

In another place in the same passage Al-Tirmidhī distinguishes between *ikhtilāf* and *iftirāq*. He uses the term *ikhtilāf* to indicate differing in a respectful manner based on *ijtihād al-raʾy* (independent reasoning). According to al-Tirmidhī, this type of scholarly differing is a mercy.[282] True scholars, al-Tirmidhī says are, *ahlu mawaddatin wa-ʿaṭf* or, "people of love and affection." In contrast to this, he describes the groups who instigate separation (*iftirāq*) as those who cause disharmony, which results in accusations of unbelief (*kufr*).[283] The groups that al-Tirmidhī accuses of *iftirāq* are exactly the same groups that Abū Muṭīʿ al-Nasafī accuses of heresy in his Ḥanafī heresiographical work mentioned earlier, *Al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Bidaʿ wa l-Ahwāʾ*. In this book, Abū Muṭīʿ al-Nasafī targets six major heresies, each of which he then breaks down into twelve sub-heresies, to make a total of seventy-two heresies, a symbolic number, which is mentioned in a report attributed to the Prophet about the number of heretical sects in Islam. These six major heretical groups are: al-Ḥarūriyya, al-Rawāfiḍa, al-Qadariyya, al-Jabriyya, al-Jahmiyya and al-Murjiʾa.[284] Al-Tirmidhī mentions all of these groups in the same

[282] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 183.
[283] Ibid, vol. 4, p. 186.
[284] Marie Bernand. "Le Kitāb al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Bidaʿ wa-l-Ahwāʾ." *Annales Islamologiques* (16). 1980, p. 60. The Ḥanafīs are often accused themselves of being Murjiʿa. See Joseph Schacht's *New Sources for Muḥammadan Theology* and Wilferd Madelung's *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran*. It seems that the Hanafīs are trying to reclaim the meaning of Murjiʿa here. The Ḥarūriyya were a sect of the Khawārij during the Umayyad period. The Rawāfiḍa is a derogatory term for the Shīʿīs. The Qadariyya refer to an early theological trend that favored human agency with respect to human actions and were a precursor to the Muʿtazilīs. The Jabriyya opposed the Qadariyya and favored divine predestination over human agency for human actions. This group was the precursor to the Traditionalists. The Jahmiyya was a sect that followed the teachings of Jahm b. Safwān and negated the existence of attributes for God. The Murjiʾa is the name of a sect that was known for denying the punishment in the Hellfire of anyone who professed the testification of faith. It was also used as a label for the early Ḥanafiyya who, as Wilferd Madelung states, accepted as Muslim anyone who made the testification of faith. This had political and economic

passage mentioned above except for the last group, al-Murjiʾa.[285] One group, al-Ḥarūriyya, does not appear in the passage just mentioned from *NU*, nevertheless, this group does appear as a heretical sect in another passage in *NU*.[286] The groups al-Tirmidhī lists in *NU* are al-Mushabbiha, al-Qadariyya, al-Jabriyya, al-Jahmiyya and al-Rāfiḍa. It is clear that al-Tirmidhī is pulling from the same heresiographical tradition as Abū Muṭīʿ al-Nasafī. Al-Tirmidhī even uses the same descriptors to identify these heretical groups using phrases such as, those who speak *min al-ahwāʾ*, or "from their caprice", a term used in the title of al-Nasafī's heresiography. We can see from the previous discussion that Kalām for al-Tirmidhī is not what the Ḥanafī theologians were engaged in. Al-Tirmidhī describes Kalām as *masaʾil al-fitna*, or "topics of discord". The following are some of the issues that he claims are the focus of heretical groups: *jabr* (being compelled), *qadr* (agency), *istiṭāʿa qabl al-fiʿl wa-maʿahu* (ability before the act and with the act), *ṭalab kayfiyyat ṣifāt Allāh* (seeking to understand the nature of God's attributes), *al-īmān hal huwa makhlūqun am lā* (whether or not belief is created), *al-qurʾān wa-mā huwa* (the Qurʾān and its nature), *al-imāma wa man istaḥaqqahā baʿd al-rasūl* (leadership and who deserves it after the Prophet).[287] These are all topics that are central to the polemics of Ḥanafī creedal and heresiographical treatises of the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). One such work is *Kitāb al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* by al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī. The *Kitāb al-Sawād* not only presents creedal topics but also provides arguments to support these topics of creed. Hence, the existence of theological arguments attached to various topics that do not follow a particular organization indicates, again, a medial stage between the early creedal texts of the 2nd- and early 3rd- Islamic

significance because the Umayyad governors in the eastern provinces sought to discourage conversion to Islam on account of loss of revenue from the poll tax (*jizya*) on non-Muslims.

[285] If al-Tirmidhī had wanted to attack the Ḥanafī theologians he could have easily included the Murjiʾa among the sects he labeled as heretical since non-Hanafīs often used the term Murjiʾa as a derogatory term for the Ḥanafīs.

[286] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 1, p. 390. The Ḥarūriyya are a type of Khawārij. Al-Tirmidhī mentions another subgrouping of the Khawārij, the Azāriqa, which are also mentioned by Abū Muṭīʾ al-Nasafī.

[287] Ibid, vol. 4, p. 187.

centuries (8th- and early 9th-centuries C.E.) and the highly structured theological texts inaugurated by al-Māturīdī.

There are many points of similarity between the theological positions in *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* and the various positions al-Tirmidhī takes in his works. We will focus here, however, on one particular topic that demonstrates the connection between al-Tirmidhī and Ḥanafī theology of the late 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). The issue of *kasb* (acquiring a livelihood) is a point discussed by both al-Tirmidhī and al-Samarqandī. *Kasb* was an especially important topic for Ṣūfīs because it dealt with the question of how to balance spiritual pursuits with the need to procure a mundane livelihood.[288] Al-Samarqandī is very precise about the Ḥanafī position on *kasb*. He states:

> *Yanbaghi an yaʿlama anna al-kasba yuftaraḍu fī baʿḍ al-awqāt liʾanna Allāh taʿālā [qāla] wa-huzzī ilayki bi-jidhʿi al-nakhla (al-āya) wa qāla ʿazza wa jalla wa-jaʿala al-nahāra maʿāshā. Wa-idhā lam yakun al-kasbu wājib^{an} lā yāḥtāju al-insānu ilā al-kasbi fa-ḥīnaʾidhin yakūnu al-kasbu sunnat^{an} waʿlam anna tarka l-kasbi rukhṣat^{un} wa inkāru al-kasbi bidʿat^{un} wa ruʾyata al-rizqi min al-kasb kufr^{un} waʿlam anna man lam yarā al-kasba wājib^{an} wa raʾāhu bidʿat^{an} fa-huwa karrāmiyy^{un} mubtadiʿ^{un} wa-man raʾā al-rizq min al-kasb fa-huwa kāfir^{un} wa-yanbaghī an yakūna al-kasbu taḥt al-yaqīn wa-l-tawakkul ʿalā al-yaqīn fa-matā lam yakun al-kasbu taḥt al-yaqīn wa-l-tawakkul fī al-yaqīn kāna dhālika kufr^{an}.*[289]
>
> He must know that earning a livelihood (*kasb*) is mandatory in some instances because Allah most high says, "Shake towards you the trunk of the tree (the verse) and he, mighty and majestic, says "and we made the day a time for livelihood." However, when earning a livelihood is not mandatory then the human being does not have to earn a living and in that instance earning a living becomes a *sunna* (supererogatory work). Know that leaving

[288] Ibid. *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, pp. 33, 46, 95. Al-Shaqīq al-Balkhī looked down on earning a livelihood while al-Muḥāsibī wrote a treatise defending its importance. The Malāmatiyya were proponents of earning a living while the Karrāmiyya eschewed ordinary livelihood and practiced begging.
[289] Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī. *Kitāb al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. Ms. British Museum. Or. 12781 fol. 58–59.

> earning a living is an exception (permitted in certain circumstances), and denying earning a living is an innovation (*bidʿa*) and seeing one's apportioned sustenance from God as coming from one's earning is unbelief. Know that whoever does not consider *kasb* to be mandatory but sees it as an innovation is a heretical Karrāmī, and whoever sees one's apportioned sustenance from God as coming from one's own earning – he is an unbeliever. Earning a livelihood must be seen as under [the power of] certainty and reliance upon God. So when earning a livelihood is not under [the power of] certainty and reliance upon God then that is unbelief.

Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī treads a fine line between several positions on *kasb*. Al-Samarqandī addresses the Karrāmiyya in particular who were accused of begging rather than earning a livelihood and were prevalent in Khurāsān and Transoxania at the end of the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.).[290] One significant point, though, in al-Samarqandī's discussion of *kasb* is that he provides the possibility that there are special circumstances in which *kasb* is not required. This is exactly al-Tirmidhī's position, however, al-Tirmidhī is more specific since he devotes a whole treatise to this issue in *Kitāb Bayān al-Kasb*. For al-Tirmidhī, earning a livelihood is required of most individuals because their lower souls are attached to the things of this world. He includes the *zuhhād* (renunciants) in this category because, while they have renounced the world, they still harbor within themselves a secret longing for it.[291] Renunciation (*zuhd*) is understood in a dialectical relationship to the world and thus, while it claims separation from the world, it is secretly wedded to it. Again, al-Tirmidhī could be obliquely referring to the Karrāmiyya who were known for their renunciation of the world as well as their negative attitude toward earning a

[290] Ibid. *Islamic Mysticism*, p. 95. Al-Tirmidhī doesn't mention the Karrāmiyya by name but possibly alludes to them when he includes the 'Mushabbaha' (The Anthropomorphists) in his list of heretical groups. The Karrāmiyya were accused of being anthropomorphists. Al-Samarqandī uses *mushabbih* (anthropomorphist) as a virtual synonym for Karrāmī. This, along with al-Tirmidhī's notion of *kasb* makes it impossible that al-Tirmidhī could have been a Karrāmī as Goldziher claims.
[291] Ibid. *Nadhariyyatuhu*, p. 244.

livelihood. For al-Tirmidhī, *kasb* is not required of the people of *maʿrifa* and the *ṣiddīqūn* because their lower souls have died (*mātat*) and they no longer desire the things of this world. Rather, they seek livelihood because it was a practice of the prophets, however, if they did not seek a livelihood, their sustenance would come to them from God without any hardship.[292] Both al-Tirmidhī and al-Samarqandī use the example of Mary to illustrate the nature of *rizq*. Al-Tirmidhī describes how Mary would be given food in her prayer niche directly from God but would also spin wool to clothe herself and her son.[293] Al-Samarqandī uses a different story of Mary to illustrate the same principle, citing that at certain times taking means is required, but at other times it may not be required for certain elect individuals. Al-Samarqandī uses the example of Mary when she leans up next to a palm tree in the pangs of her childbirth. In the Qurʾān Mary is told to shake the palm trunk so that dates will fall for her to eat. For al-Samarqandī, this story explains both the need to take advantage of the means that are available for provision, while also realizing that one's reliance and true sustenance must be with God. The idea here is that it would be impossible for Mary to shake the palm trunk, but her being ordered to do so demonstrates the *sunna* (supererogatory nature) of taking means even for someone of her stature. Hence, the dates fell from the palm and she ate from them as a miracle. Mary proactively did her part whether or not it would have any effect.

Both al-Tirmidhī and al-Samarqandī place *kasb* under the larger umbrella of *tawakkul*. In structural terms it is unlikely that this could be accidental. As is mentioned above in the quote from *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*, al-Samarqandī explicitly states that *kasb* must come under (*taḥt*) both *yaqīn* (certainty) and *tawakkul* (reliance upon God). Al-Tirmidhī, in *al-Furūq wa-Manʿ al-Tarāduf,* explains *kasb* in terms of the difference between *tawakkul* and *ittikāl.* For al-Tirmidhī,

[292] Ibid, pp. 244–245.
[293] Ibid, p. 245.

tawakkul means seeking the provision that God has already destined for one while knowing that it will come according to his planning. On the other hand, *ittikāl* can also mean to sit idly and wait for one's provision to come to one out of laziness. His response to such a person who refuses to expend effort for his sustenance is that such a person does not know whether God had ordained that particular sustenance to come through his effort or not. If so, that sustenance would be withheld until the requisite effort is spent.[294] For al-Tirmidhī only the *ʿārifūn* (gnostics) can have true reliance upon God, which requires knowing when God wants one to seek one's livelihood by taking means (*asbāb*). Such individuals know when God wants them to desist from taking means (*asbāb*) and to rely completely upon Him. We can see here that al-Tirmidhī's notion of *kasb* fits neatly into al-Samarqandī's rubric.

Al-Tirmidhī's Relationship to Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī

In the previous discussion we demonstrated that al-Tirmidhī was working within the framework of the Ḥanafī theological tradition, both in terms of the earliest creedal texts of the tradition, as well as two Ḥanafī texts that date to al-Tirmidhī's general time period. This means that we can safely say that Hanafī theology represents one of al-Tirmidhī's discourse streams. We have every reason to believe that al-Tirmidhī saw himself as a reformer and defender of what he considered to be an orthodox understanding of Islam. That is why he wrote two specific heresiographical works that reflect positions in the Ḥanafī tradition, namely *al-Radd ʿalā al-Rāfiḍa* (*Refutation of the Shīʿīs*) and *al-Radd ʿalā al-Muʿaṭṭila* (*Refutation of Those who Deny Attributes*, i.e., the Muʿtazilīs). Both of these texts are considered authentic by Sezgin and Radtke. Al-Tirmidhī's reformist approach was not limited to theology but focused also on Ḥanafī

[294] Ibid, pp. 249–250.

Uṣūl (Legal Methodology). Even before the work of al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370/980),[295] which Marie Bernand considers to be the earliest extant attempt to codify Ḥanafī Uṣūl, al-Tirmidhī had written several lengthy works that revised basic tenets of Ḥanafī Uṣūl almost a hundred years earlier.[296] Despite this, most scholars of al-Tirmidhī do not see him as having had much of an impact within the Ḥanafī School. This misreading of al-Tirmidhī has been exacerbated by limited access to his full corpus of writings both published and in manuscript. It is my contention that al-Māturīdī, who is credited as the systematizer of Ḥanafī theology, received much of the inspiration for his monumental work *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* from al-Tirmidhī. Al-Māturīdī lived in the same general area as al-Tirmidhī and was in the next generation of Ḥanafī theologians after al-Tirmidhī. Al-Māturīdī's ideas, while consistent with Ḥanafī teachings before and after him, include some elements that would seem to come out of a vacuum had we not had access to al-Tirmidhī's works.[297] The idea that al-Māturīdī is a Ḥanafī reaction to al-Ashʿarī does not adequately explain the existence of these elements given the context of al-Māturīdī in the larger Ḥanafī theological tradition. Furthermore, neither Ulrich Rudolph nor Claude Gilliot support such a thesis. Not only is al-Māturīdī's thought in many ways more advanced than al-Ashʿarī, but al-Māturīdī's contribution to Ḥanafī theology is not in any way in conversation with al-Ashʿarī's teachings.

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[295] Al-Jaṣṣāṣ was the chief representative of *aṣḥāb al-raʾy* in Baghdād during his time. He studied Ḥanafī law under ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan al-Karkhī. His work *al-Fuṣūl fī al-Uṣūl* is one of the earliest formulations of Ḥanafī legal theory. O Spies. "al-Djaṣṣāṣ". Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 16 July 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-djassas-SIM_2017> First appeared online: 2012

[296] Al-Tirmidhī attacks the Ḥanafī notion of *qiyās* that is handed down from Abū Ḥanīfa. In *al-Furūq wa-Manʿ al-Tarāduf* al-Tirmidhī calls Ḥanafī *qiyās* "*mushākila*" (resemblancing) rather than true *qiyās*. For al-Tirmidhī true *qiyās* can only be achieved by returning to a legal cause (ʿ*illa*) that is based, not on the particular new item at hand and its relationship to something in the Sharīʿa that it resembles, but rather an ʿ*illa* that is based on principles derived directly from the Qurʾān and Sunna.

[297] Ulrich, Rudolph. *Al-Māturīdī und die sunnitische theologie in Samarkand*. Leiden, New York: E.J. Brill. 1997, p. 344.

In the last chapter we discussed al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma*, its Pythagorean roots, and the way in which *ḥikma* functions to maintain the viability of opposites and, in turn, confers order onto the universe. We also discussed the way al-Tirmidhī uses *ḥikma* to set up his discussion of *walāya* and indicate its non-dual nature. This use of *ḥikma* is signature to al-Tirmidhī and only appears in detail in his *KH*. Al-Tirmidhī's particular use of *ḥikma* is not found anywhere in the pre-Maturidī Ḥanafī texts, yet appears distinctly in al-Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. It is highly probable that al-Māturīdī read al-Tirmidhī's works since they both belonged to the same theological tradition and both lived in the same general locale only one generation apart. Ulrich Rudolph considers al-Māturīdī's use of *ḥikma* to be due to Muʿtazilī influence. The assumption throughout al-Māturīdī's work is that God is always wise (*ḥakīm*) and just (*ʿadl*) and according to Rudolph this means that al-Māturīdī is applying rational standards to God.[298] While this is plausible given that al-Māturīdī spends a great deal of effort attempting to refute the Muʿtazilīs, this does not actually fit with al-Māturīdī's use of *ḥikma*. Al-Māturīdī states:

> *Wa-law amʿana hāʾulāʾi al-firaq al-naẓara fī-mā taqaddama min dhikri al-adillati la-ʿalimū qusūra ʿuqūlihim ʿan al-wuqūf ʿalā al-ḥikmati al-bashariyyati faḍl*^{an} *ʿan an yuḥīṭu bi-ḥikmati al-rubūbiyya … wa-lazima al-qawlu bi-kulli mā lā tablughuhu ʿuqūlunā bi-darki al-ḥikma baʿda an thabata annahu manshaʾuhu wa-muḥdithuhu an naʿlam anna fīhi ḥikmat*^{un} *bālighat*^{un} *lam tablughuhā.*[299]
>
> Had those (heretical) factions looked closely at the arguments previously presented they would have known the limited nature of their intellects in understanding human *ḥikma* let alone that they could encompass divine *ḥikma* … and it is necessary to follow anything our intellects do not understand of *ḥikma* after it has been confirmed that He (God) initiated it and brought it into existence

[298] Ibid, p. 330.
[299] Al-Māturīdī, Abū Manṣūr. *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. Dar Ṣādir: Beirut. 2001, pp. 180–181.

> and that we should know there is a prescient *ḥikma* that has not reached (our intellects).

Al-Māturīdī's concept of *ḥikma* is clearly not Muʿtazilī since the Muʿtazilīs would never have conceived of a believer following a *ḥikma* that his intellect could not comprehend. The Muʿtazilīs considered God's rationality to be similar to human rationality. However, as we can see from Māturidī, he considers *ḥikma* to be of two types, divine *ḥikma* and human *ḥikma*. Al-Tirmidhī makes a similar distinction in his definition of *ḥikma* in *KH*:

> *Al-ḥikmatu iḥkāmu al-umūr ʿalā jihatihā min āfatihā fī subulihā subul al-umūr min al-rabbi ilā al-ʿabdi wa-min al-ʿabdi ilā al-rabbi murūruha ʿalā turuqin min wujūhi al-asbābi wa-l-ālāti fa-l-asbābu al-khārijatu min al-nafsi al-ālātu al-jawāriḥu al-mukhtalifatu fa-bi-l-ḥikmati yaḥkumuhā al-ʿabd.*[300]
>
> *Ḥikma* is the judgment of things according to their various harmful qualities in the way they function and proceed from the Lord to his servant and from the servant to his Lord in terms of their causes and means, causes being outside of the soul, means being the various limbs, so with *ḥikma* the servant comes to gain control over them.

For al-Tirmidhī, there is human *ḥikma*, that is, knowledge of what proceeds from the servant to God and then there is divine *ḥikma*, which is knowledge that proceeds from God to the servant. Later, in *KH*, al-Tirmidhī further clarifies this by explaining that the *ḥakīm* is like someone walking through the wilderness who knows the pathways and is aware of the various wild beasts that lurk there and so can pass safely through.[301] Hence, *ḥikma* is the 'worldly' knowledge of things outside of the soul that relates to vices and temptations, likened to wild beasts that can attack the soul on its path towards God. At the same time, for al-Tirmidhī, *ḥikma* can also be a

[300] Ibid. *Kitāb al-ḥikma*, fol. 1v.
[301] Ibid, fol. 6v.

knowledge from God and an inspiration about the way God interacts with the world. Al-Māturīdī uses the same vocabulary as al-Tirmidhī in terms of *āfāt* (harmful qualities) and *ālāt* (means) in describing how *ḥikma* functions. Al-Māturīdī argues that human senses are limited in the same way that *ʿuqūl* (intellects) are limited. For al-Māturīdī, intellects understand the world in terms of opposites (*aḍdād*), but due to the created and limited nature of intellects, sometimes they consider good things to be bad and bad things to be good. Hence, he says that it is possible that something could befall a person that would prevent him from being able to distinguish between wisdom (*ḥikma*) and foolishness (*safah*).[302] The inability to make true distinctions for al-Māturīdī is a result of custom (*ʿāda*) and habit (*ulf*). The only way for a person to truly understand things as they are and make correct distinctions is through divine *ḥikma* (*al-ḥikma al-rubūbiyya*) and through this *ḥikma* such a person is protected from *āfāt* (harmful qualities) since his usual state is that he is overcome by his limbs (*jawāriḥ*) even though he makes use of means (*ālāt*). Al-Māturīdī explains that a person guided by divine *ḥikma* realizes that he acts through a strength (*quwwa*) created by God and a more useful knowledge. This is what is called *taḥakkum* (gaining control) over weakness and ignorance through God who is able and knowing.[303] It is almost as if al-Māturīdī is quoting al-Tirmidhī's definition of *ḥikma*. The vocabulary is practically identical and the structure of the various parts of the concept of *ḥikma* for both of them is very close.

It is clear that both al-Māturīdī and al-Tirmidhī are operating under the same definition of *ḥikma*, however, this could be because they happen to have had access to similar sources. The next question then, is whether or not they actually 'use' *ḥikma* in similar ways. Al-Tirmidhī uses *ḥikma* to support his concept of *walāya* and to indicate the nature of the station of *fardāniyya*

[302] Ibid. *Al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 180–181.
[303] Ibid, p. 181.

(non-duality) that is characteristic of the *kubarāʾ* and the *awliyāʾ*. As we demonstrated in Chapter 2, *ḥikma* serves to frame the non-dual nature of al-Tirmidhī's mystical theosophy. For al-Tirmidhī, the *awliyāʾ* exemplify God's non-dual nature and in that sense are a site of the manifestation (*tajallī*) of his attributes. Al-Māturīdī is not concerned with *walāya*, instead, he focuses on theological arguments concerning the nature of God and His existence. Nevertheless, al-Māturīdī uses *ḥikma* to indicate a non-dual concept of God. For al-Māturīdī, opposites (*aḍiḍḍād*) lead to foolishness and meaninglessness when they are not kept from collapsing in on each other.[304] Just like al-Tirmidhī, al-Māturīdī sees *ḥikma* as the maintenance of order and harmony through the sustaining of the distinctness of opposites. While both are operating under the same basic definition of *ḥikma*, one key difference is that al-Tirmidhī indicates that this order is preserved through the knowledge of the *ḥakīm* as an instrument of God, while al-Māturīdī simply describes God as being the one who maintains this order directly. *Ḥikma* is defined in multiple places in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* as "putting things in their proper place". When al-Māturīdī refers to "things in their proper place" he means the placing of opposites in their proper places in relation to other opposites. For opposites to have a particular place and order it is necessary that something must exist to define that order and bring it about, i.e., God. In a section on theodicy in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* al-Māturīdī indicates how the *ḥikma* of opposites and their interaction in the world indicates the non-dual nature of God. The argument begins with al-Māturīdī's premise, argued earlier, that *ḥikma* (wisdom) must connect to all things created by God. He does not simply argue that good is known through evil and vice versa, but rather that God creates good and evil so that he can be known through the interaction of these opposites. The example he gives, interestingly, is the conflict between the enemies of God and his *awliyāʾ*. Through this

[304] Ibid, p. 179.

conflict, God's warning (*ḥadhar*), support (*taʾahhub*), aid (*maʿūna*) and victory (*naṣr*) are known.[305] Al-Māturīdī then goes on to explain how the opposites in the world indicate God's non-dual oneness. Al-Māturīdī succinctly explains this below:

> *Wa ayḍan inna al-khalqa ʿalā ikhtilāf jawharihim fī al-maḍār wa-al-manāfiʿ jaʿalahum Allāh fī al-dalālati ʿalā mudabbir*^{in} *lahum ḥakīm ʿalīm wa-ʿalā waḥdāniyyatihi ka-jawhar*^{in} *wāḥid fī al-ittifāq min jihat al-dalāla wa-l-shahāda. Wa-lā quwwata illā billāh. Fa-yakūnu fī dhālik bayān ʿajīb ḥikmatihi an jamaʿa bayn al-ḍārr wa-al-nāfiʿ wa al-khayr wa-l-sharr ʿalā tanāqudihimā fī al-dalālati ʿalā waḥdāniyyatihi wa-l-shahādati bi-rububiyyatihi wāḥīd*^{an}.[306]
>
> And furthermore, all created things depending on their various essences are either in harm or benefit. God made them to indicate his being one who plans for them, one wise and knowledgeable and also to indicate his oneness as one single essence as is agreed upon from the standpoint of proof and testament. There is no strength or power except by God. So, from that the amazing nature of his wisdom is demonstrated such that he joins between harm and benefit, good and evil despite their being opposed to each other as a proof of his oneness and as a witness to his being one through his lordship.

It is clear that al-Māturīdī, like al-Tirmidhī, uses *ḥikma* to frame *tawḥīd* (God's unity) such that it is understood in a non-dual sense. Both use *ḥikma* in similar ways but to make different types of arguments. Al-Māturīdī is attempting to explain the non-dual nature of God's essence in terms of the interaction of opposites and he uses the term *waḥdāniyya* for non-duality. Al-Tirmidhī, on the other hand, argues for the non-dual nature of sainthood (*fardāniyya*) because it is a manifestation of God's non-duality in the world. Both al-Māturīdī and al-Tirmidhī conceive of God in non-dual terms but are applying the framework of *ḥikma* in different contexts.

[305] Ibid, p. 175.
[306] Ibid, p. 176.

Al-Tirmidhī and the Later Ḥanafī Tradition

So far we have demonstrated a strong connection between al-Tirmidhī and the early Ḥanafī creedal texts, the Ḥanafī theological tradition of al-Tirmidhī's own era, and finally al-Māturīdī, who was a major figure in the transition of Ḥanafī theology into the phase of formal methods and dialectical reasoning. Up to this point, none of the Ḥanafī theological texts have mentioned al-Tirmidhī by name. The connections have been demonstrated through structural similarities and the use of terminology. Among the later Ḥanafī theologians, however, al-Tirmidhī is actually mentioned by name and clearly counted as one of their own. Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī in his *Tabṣirat al-Adilla*, which is by far the most comprehensive work in the Māturīdī theological school, quotes al-Tirmidhī by name on the topic of the beholding God with an eye in the next life. Al-Nasafī writes:

> *Wa-dhakara al-shaykh Abū Abdillah Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥakīm fī taṣnīf*^{in} *lahu sammāhu: Masʾalat*^{un} *fī Sulūki Ahli al-ʿAdli bayna al-Mushabbihati wa-l-Muʿaṭṭila, fa-qāla: ittafaqat ʿalā ḥadīth al-ruʾyati ʿiddat*^{un} *min aṣḥābi rasūl Allāhi ʿalayhi al-salām kulluhum aʾimma.*[307]
>
> Shaykh Abū Abdullāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥakīm said in a work by him which he called *Treatise on the Way of the People of Balance between the Anthropomorphists and those who Negate Attributes*, "A large number of the companions of the Messenger, upon whom be peace, agreed upon the *ḥadīth* of the vision of God in the next life; all of them were eminent.

Al-Lāmishī, the student of al-Nasafī, also mentions al-Tirmidhī on the same topic as his teacher, but adds the title of *zāhid* (mystic). He states, *wa dhakar al-shaykh al-zāhid Muḥammad b. ʿAlī*

[307] Nasafī, Maymūn b. Muḥammad. *Tabṣirat al-adillah: fī uṣūl al-dīn ʿalā ṭarīqat al-Imām Abī Manṣūr al-Māturīdī*. Ed. Klūd Salāmah. Dimashq: al-Maʿhad al-ʿIlmī al-Faransī li-l-Dirāsāt al-ʿArabīyah bi-Dimashq. 1990, p. 400.

al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī raḥimahullāh fī taṣnīfin lahu… or, "The Shaykh, the mystic, Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī in a work of his…"[308] Here, al-Lāmishī includes the title of *zāhid* but does not mean 'renunciant'. As we will see later, the term *zāhid* and its plural *zuhhād* among Ḥanafīs in Khurāsān and Transoxania came to indicate a mystic or what we would call a Ṣūfī.

Mysticism in the Ḥanafī Tradition

If al-Tirmidhī was thoroughly integrated into the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theological tradition as we have sought to demonstrate, then the question remains as to why this should have been overlooked by scholarship for such a long time. Annemarie Schimmel considered al-Tirmidhī to be a Shafiʿī, Yves Marquet considered him a Traditionalist, while Bernd Radtke correctly understood him to be a Ḥanafī, yet considered his Ḥanafī leanings superficial. The evidence we have brought to bear demonstrates the contrary. He was, in fact, an important figure to the Ḥanafī theological school and played an important role in its development. Part of the reason for the inability to place al-Tirmidhī accurately in the historical context arises from the clearly mystical nature of his thought. Al-Tirmidhī purposefully attempts to produce works that are holistic in nature and that reflect what he sees as the important devotional and inspirational function of religious texts. Often times, as ʿAbd Allāh Baraka mentions, these texts have underlying Fiqhī (jurisprudential) and Kalāmī (theological) motives.[309] Another possibility is that Ḥanafī theology has been misunderstood and understudied in relation to Ashaʿarī Kalām and so Ḥanafī theology sometimes goes unrecognized for what it is. Even more so, there is a tendency in the study of Islamic mysticism in general to disassociate theology from mysticism, possibly as

[308] Al-Lāmishī, Maḥmūd b. Zayd. *Kitāb al-tamhīd li-qawāʿid al-tawḥīd*. Ed. ʿAbd al-Majīd Turkī. Bayrūt: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī. 1995, p. 80.
[309] Ibid. *Nadhariyyatuhu*, p. 95.

a result of this trend in European concepts of mysticism. What we find in general among Ḥanafī theologians in Khurāsān and Transoxania is a strong mystical current in their works. At this point we will only demonstrate the mystical tendencies in some of the works that we have already discussed to show that al-Tirmidhī's mysticism is not out of place in his intellectual milieu.

In al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī's *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*, we find a list of individuals appended to the end of the treatise who are credited with upholding certain doctrines championed by the text, a foundational work in the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theological tradition. The fact that these lists occur at the end of the work and include the very name of the supposed author himself means that these sections were in no doubt added by later generations of Ḥanafī/Māturīdī scholars. A procedure used in this creedal text, especially in sections in which these lists occur, is to present a point of jurisprudence that differentiates Ḥanafīs from Shāfiʿīs or even Shīʿīs and then list to the eminent individuals from particular generations who upheld that point of jurisprudence. The companions of the Prophet are listed and then the scholars of hadith and jurisprudence after them and then the *zuhhād* (mystics) and *ʿubbād* (pious ones). Based on the names in these lists it is probable that they were added to the text sometime around the early 10th-century C.E., at a time when Sufism was taking root, as is attested by the works of al-Kalābādhī, al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī. The list of *zuhhād* (mystics) begins with Ṣāliḥ al-Marrī (d. 172/788 or 176/792) and Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī (d. 245/859) but conspicuously leaves out the Baghdād mystics such as al-Junayd. Almost all of the mystics listed were of eastern Hanafī tendencies. This could possibly be a result of the fierce competition between Hanafīs, who were using the term *zuhhād*, and Shāfiʿīs who were identifying themselves as Ṣūfīs.[310] Another equally valid and more probable

[310] The research concluding that most early Ṣūfīs were Shāfiʿī needs to be revisited based on a closer reading of *Tarīkh Nīshāpūr* by al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī. My own reading of this text has demonstrated that the connection between Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanafīs in Nīshāpūr during the 4th- and 5th- Islamic centuries (10th- and 11th-centuries C.E.) is not conclusive.

interpretation is that these were still separate mystical traditions in their own right that were only merged by al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī in the generations following Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī. Al-Tirmidhī provides a useful reference point in this respect for understanding the relationship between Ḥanafī theology and mysticism. The mystics who al-Tirmidhī mentions in his various works are similar to the mystics appended to *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī, the author of *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*, is often referred to as a mystic in later biographical accounts. He is also listed as a mystic in the section of *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* that was later added to the text after his death. Rudolph mentions that al-Māturīdī had mystical propensities and later Ḥanafī theologians such as Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī frequently mention the same local mystics of Khurāsān and Transoxania, which represents a distinct layer in al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt*. As we will show in a forthcoming chapter, the relationship between mysticism and Ḥanafī theology is a very close one and existed since the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). Therefore, Islamic theology should not be seen as opposed to Islamic mysticism or in conflict with it since many early theologians were also mystics, especially in the eastern Ḥanafī milieu.

The Effect of Ḥanafism on al-Tirmidhī's Doctrine of *Walāya*

If we can agree that al-Tirmidhī was actively engaged in the discourse stream of Ḥanafī jurisprudential and theological thought, then it is clear why he developed his doctrine of sainthood in particular ways. In Chapter 5 we will continue to discuss the nature of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood, however, here we will discuss an important effect of Ḥanafī theology upon al-Tirmidhī, which concerns the way he opened up the possibility of sainthood to all Muslims. As we mentioned in the discussion about the Ḥanafī doctrine of belief (*īmān*), the Ḥanafīs are noted for having a very expansive definition of belief. This definition only required believers to

state the formula of the testification of faith (*shahada*) and to believe it in their hearts. Wilferd Madelung demonstrates how this ran counter to an early Umayyad political establishment that preferred an Arab identity to Islam and sought to discourage conversion.[311] We have been using al-Samarqandī's *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* as a Ḥanafī text representative of al-Tirmidhī's general approach to Ḥanafī theology since it corresponds closely to many elements of his thought. In al-Samarqandī's treatise the *awliyāʾ* are described as synonymous with the *muʾminūn* (believers). He writes, *yanbaghī an yaʿlam annahu lā yakūnu ʿaql al-awliyāʾ wa-al-muʾminūn wa-ʿaql al-kuffār mustawiyān*, "One must know that the intellect of the saints and the believers is not the same as the intellect of the unbelievers."[312] Al-Samarqandī continues to clarify this by presenting five types of *ʿaql* with the *awliyāʾ* and *muʾminūn* both sharing the *ʿaql ʿaṭāʾī* (the bequeathed intellect), the third of the five intellects. The first two are shared by the unbelievers and the last two are shared by the prophets and messengers. Al-Samarqandī clearly indicates that any Muslim believer can possibly be one of the *awliyāʾ*. We will demonstrate in Chapter 5 how al-Tirmidhī states the exact same formula, conceding that all of the *muwaḥḥidūn* (those who make the testification of Islamic faith) are a type of *awliyāʾ*. This is often not well understood by those who read al-Tirmidhī's works because of his often vaulted mysticism and the unique terminology, such as his distinction between the *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* (the saints who observe the right(s) God)[313] and the *awliyāʾ Allāh* (the bona fide saints). For al-Tirmidhī, *walāya* has many

[311] Madelung, Wilferd. *Religious trends in early Islamic Iran*. Albany, N.Y.: Persian Heritage Foundation. 1988, p. 13.
[312] Ibid. *Al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*, fol. 44.
[313] This is similar to how al-Muḥāsibī treats the word *ḥaqq* (truth, reality, right) in the title of his work *al-riʿāya li-ḥuqūq Allāh*, meaning, "Watchfulness over the rights of God." Radtke translates this type of saint as "the friends of what is due unto God," which has a similar meaning. Translating this term is particular difficult because it is specific to al-Tirmidhi and is not used in his other works. Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 41–42. The closest al-Tirmidhi comes to explaining this term is when he distinguishes in *NU* between *ahl lā ilāhā illā Allāh* (the people of 'there is no god but God') and *ahl qawl lā ilāhā illā Allāh* (the people of the words 'there is no god but God'). The first group corresponds to *awliyāʾ Allāh* and the second to *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* in *SA*. The second group mentioned in *NU* are those who say it on their tongues but whose actions still follow their lower desires (*hawāhā*). The first group in *NU*

forms and types and at its most basic level it covers all Muslims who make the testification of faith. For those believers who are sincerely seeking God on the path of *maʿrifa*, they are the *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* and they are those who have been chosen by God for his special favor, these are the bona fide saints (*awliyāʾ Allāh*). Even among these bona fide saints there are various types of saints such as the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages), the *muqarrabūn* (those brought near), and the *munfaridūn* (the solitairs) as well as the *ṣiddīqūn* (the truthful ones).

Conclusion

Foucault's episteme has helped us to better situate al-Tirmidhī within the social, mystical and theological currents of his time. By thinking in terms of discourse streams and a 'knowledge-type' of theology, we are guided by Rosenthal and Foucault to identify the systems of meaning that connect al-Tirmidhī to the intellectual currents of his day. The Ḥanafī/Murjiʾī/Māturīdī theological tradition played a major role in the eastern lands of the Abbasid empire and when we begin to read al-Tirmidhī through this lens we begin to see that his thought builds upon ideas working within this milieu just as it is in conversation with it. That al-Tirmidhī was an independent and unique thinker for his time is no doubt the case, however, he was not someone who operated outside of a pre-existing framework as some scholars of Islamic mysticism have posited. One can see here how al-Tirmidhī's identity as a reformer comes to the fore. Like al-Ghazālī after him, al-Tirmidhī saw real problems with the way religious knowledge was becoming formalized and institutionalized. He wanted to reclaim what he saw as the original

have realized the true meaning of the testification of faith both inwardly and outwardly because they no longer follow their lower desires since God has chosen them and made those desires inoperative. Hence, one way to view the *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* is that these are the saints who are 'trying' to observe the rights (*ḥuqūq*) of God but are falling short and inevitably following their lowere desires despite their efforts. At some point in the spiritual path (*ṭarīq*) God may choose the *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* to become bona fide saints (*awliyāʾ Allāh*) through his mercy. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 499.

vigor of the revelatory message after its apparent fossilization through disciplines such as jurisprudence and theology. Al-Tirmidhī believed that these should not and cannot be separated from the hidden spiritual realities from which they emerge. With such a complex and nuanced figure such as al-Tirmidhī, we have to look at his ideas holistically in relation to his larger body of works and within his social and learned context. By identifying Ḥanafī theology as one of the several discourse streams within which al-Tirmidhī operated we can begin to see that, while scholars of Islamic mysticism often see him as a mystic, this was only one of his multiple identities. For al-Tirmidhī, theology functions best when it maintains the parameters by which a free religious discourse can take place. Thus, in his *NU,* al-Tirmidhī stresses that points of belief in Islam are few and simple and that theology is meant to serve as a support for *walāya*.

Chapter 4

A Ṣūfī by any Other Name:

al-Tirmidhī's Relationship to Islamic Mysticism

> The question as to whether al-Tirmidhī was a Ṣūfī or not depends heavily on how we define Sufism vis-à-vis Islamic mysticism. If we look at Islamic mysticism as a discourse stream that came to conceptualize knowledge as light, we find that al-Tirmidhī was an active participant in this discourse stream. The current field of Islamic mysticism sees al-Tirmidhī as an outlier. I would like to correct this view by situating him more centrally within the discourse stream of Islamic mysticism. I will show that a close reading of al-Tirmidhī's thought will help us to better understand Sufism as a particular movement within Islamic mysticism.

Before addressing al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* in more detail in Chapter 5, we will examine the theoretical backdrop that informs al-Tirmidhī's thought by exploring his relationship to other mystical movements in early Islam. In Chapter 1 we discussed how al-Tirmidhī uses the language of clientage (*walāʾ*) to propose a new type of religious authority, which ultimately would invest the *ʿulamāʾ* as custodians of that authority. In Chapter 2 we showed how al-Tirmidhī uses aspects of Hellenistic thought and Pythagorean notions of wisdom (*hikma*) to frame his discussion of the *awliyāʾ*. In Chapter 3 we explored al-Tirmidhī's debt to Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theology and how his use of categories helped to situate and justify his concept of *walāya* within his theological discourse. There are multiple discourse streams at work here that blend and interact within al-Tirmidhī's thought and we are interested in how he developed and integrated these discursive formations as his concept of *walāya* emerged and took form. The

social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*) provided a strong social basis for the preservation of Arab privilege and lent itself to the transformation of this social privilege into sainthood (*walāya*), thereby sanctifying the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*). This transformation was possible because the category of *walāya* had already existed in the Ḥanafī theological tradition, although it was not linked to social or political power before al-Tirmidhī's time. Al-Tirmidhī then uses elements of Pythagoreanism to posit a gnoseology that elevates wisdom (*ḥikma*) to the level of a type of revelatory knowledge that speaks to the human being through Nature. This is different than the gnosis (*maʿrifa*) of the proto-Ṣūfīs who styled their knowledge as light (*nūr*). Thus, the Islamic mystical tradition had already devised a language and a path (*ṭarīq*) to a realization of this type of theophanic knowledge that was not mediated through either texts or Nature. Light (*nūr*) is one of the knowledge-types Rosenthal uses to frame the Islamic mystical tradition. Al-Tirmidhī is the first one to bring all of the three knowledge types we have just discussed together in one system. For al-Tirmidhī, it is the saints (*awliyāʾ*) and not the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) who pass beyond both textual knowledge (*al-ʿilm al-ẓāhir*) and the knowledge of Nature (*ʿilm al-asbāb*). In this way al-Tirmidhī situates gnosis (*maʿrifa*) in relation to the two important modes of knowledge in his time: textual religious knowledge within the Islamic orbit and philosophical or wisdom-based knowledge whose roots were in the Hellenistic tradition. Al-Tirmidhī not only borrows heavily from what he calls the *ṭarīq al-maʿrifa* (the path of gnosis) associated with the proto-Ṣūfīs, but his concept of *walāya* plays an important role in the development of what later becomes Sufism. I will discuss later how I view Sufism in its mature form as a product of the great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century.[314] Thus, while so many have sought to understand the

[314] Francesco Chiabotti (2014) discusses how al-Qushayrī represents the climax of the development of Ṣūfī aesthetics and practice between the early masters and the later great *shaykhs* such as ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166). He also argues that al-Qushayrī represents the best example of a harmonization of the various different social groups and knowledge-types of his time. Chiabotti's study of al-Qushayrī supports the idea that al-Qushayrī

continuities that link al-Tirmidhī to his context, this study is also interested in understanding the ruptures and discontinuities that al-Tirmidhī initiated with his new approach to *walāya*.

Was al-Tirmidhī a 'Ṣūfī'?

Most scholars in the field of Islamic mysticism (Alexander Knysh, Nile Green, Ahmet Karamustafa, Laury Silvers et al.) agree upon a narrative that situates early Sufism in Baghdād during the latter half of the 9th-century C.E. as a somewhat *avant-garde* movement of mystics who self-identified as Ṣūfīs and who were somehow connected to the circle of al-Junayd.[315] The term Sufism itself is much older, reaching back to pre-Islamic times and was used to designate certain Christian ascetics in the same general geographical region of Iraq.[316] This Baghdād tradition then moved eastward to Khurāsān where it blended with older Khurāsānian and Transoxanian ascetic and mystical traditions until it superseded and replaced them.[317] From Khurāsān, Sufism spread to all corners of the Islamic world and continues to be a vibrant mystical tradition in Islam to this day. This narrative assumes a somewhat continuous trajectory from the circle of al-Junayd up to the 5th- and 6th- Islamic centuries (11th- and 12th-centuries C.E.) Ṣūfīs of Khurāsān in Nīshāpūr. While some elements of this narrative are undeniable, the narrative also leaves unanswered questions concerning the role that other indigenous mystical

(we include al-Sulamī who was the basis for much of al-Qushayrī's thought) developed a broad synthesis of Islamic knowledge and practice that significantly informed Sufism as a mystical movement. For this reason we dub the combined contribution of al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī to Islamic mysticism as, 'The Great Mystical Synthesis of the 5th/11th-Century'. In this sense, the introduction of Khurāsānian mysticism into Sufism by al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī was as important to what would become mature Sufism, if not more, than the contribution of al-Junayd's circle of Baghdād Ṣūfīs. Chiabotti, Francesco. *Entre soufisme et savoir islamique: l'oeuvre de ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī (376-465/ 986-1072)*. Diss, Universite de Provence. 2014, pp. 632–635.

[315] Ibid. *Sufism, the formative period*, p. 7.

[316] Ibid. *Sufism: a global history*, p. 18. Green argues that this does not necessarily point to a Christian 'origin' for Sufism because early Muslim ascetics can be seen just as much as rivals to Christian ascetics as they were imitators of their conventions. Hence, Green sees this process as one of 'mirroring' rather than 'borrowing'.

[317] *Ibid. Islamic mysticism*, pp. 99–100.

trends played in the great mystical synthesis of the 5th- Islamic century (11th-century C.E.). Furthermore, the reduction of Sufism to its Baghdād variety presupposes a Baghdād-centric view of Islamic mysticism, which is a view of Islamic mysticism that we must concede most Muslim mystics share to this day. However, we must stress, based on our reading of Foucault, that the discontinuities are just as important as the continuities when we are talking about Islamic mysticism or any discourse stream structured by an episteme. What we seek to demonstrate here is that Sufism in its mature form represents a new development in Islamic mysticism and is an emergent event brought about by the confluence of a number of factors. This understanding of Sufism makes better sense of al-Tirmidhī's place in Islamic mysticism, since he is often characterized as an outlier and somewhat of an anomaly.[318]

Bernd Radtke is emphatic that al-Tirmidhī was not a Ṣūfī. He quotes several early Ṣūfīs who deny that al-Tirmidhī was a Ṣūfī. Among these was the early Ṣūfī historian Jaʿfar al-Khuldī (d. 348/959) and ʿAbdallāh al-Anṣārī (d. 481/1088), a Ḥanbalī Ṣūfī who is understood to have been markedly against any type of theological speculation. Despite the positions of these two mystics, there were many other early Ṣūfīs who did consider al-Tirmidhī to be part of the Ṣūfī tradition.[319] In this way we can see that al-Tirmidhī problematizes our notions of what it means to be a Ṣūfī since Ṣūfīs themselves were split on whether he should be counted among their number. Al-Tirmidhī never used the term '*ṣūfī*' and in several places in *NU* he speaks in derogatory terms about "those who wear wool", which we can assume is most likely a statement criticizing asceticism rather than any particular mystical group associated with the nascent Ṣūfīs of Baghdād. It is also important to remember that al-Tirmidhī precedes the seeding of Baghdād Sufism in Khurāsān and Transoxania by about a hundred years if we do not take into account a

[318] Ibid, p. 105.
[319] Al-Sulamī, al-Qushayrī and al-Kalābādhī all considered al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī to be a forerunner of Sufism.

few early teachers such as Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 320/932) who may have fled Baghdād in the wake of the inquisition of Ghulām Khalīl (d. 275/888).[320] Nevertheless, al-Tirmidhī's writings exhibit many of the characteristics that we would associate with Sufism in the 5th- and 6th-Islamic centuries in Khurāsān.[321] In some cases al-Tirmidhī's mysticism is 'closer' to what we might call the product of the great mystical synthesis of the 5th- and 6th- Islamic centuries (i.e., Sufism) with his emphasis on a type of mysticism that is squarely anti-ascetical. Yet, many of the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād were ascetics to a large degree and al-Junayd, in his writings, clearly defended asceticism and its important role in his mystical training.[322] If we contrast al-Junayd's views on asceticism with those of al-Qushayrī and al-Sulamī, we find in the latter two an approach that is more in line with al-Tirmidhī's views.[323] Al-Junayd's unique articulation of Ṣūfī aesthetics was seminal in defining a way of mystical practice; however, it was not a way that was accessible to other than a small elite who could internalize his often highly complicated terminology. On the other hand, if we understand Sufism in a broader sense to be the product of an encompassing mystical synthesis of the 5th- Islamic century (11th-century C.E.), we see that this type of Sufism

[320] Biographical dictionaries indicate that not until the 11th-century do we find the beginnings of a significant number of scholars identified as Ṣūfīs. Before this time those who are identified as Ṣūfīs are few and usually are those who at some point passed through Baghdād. Up through the 12th-century indigenous forms of Islamic mysticism were dominant in Khurāsān and Transoxania. Ibid. *Sufism a global history*, p. 45. For some of the reasons pertaining to al-Wāsiṭī's emigration to Khurāsān see Silvers, *A Soaring Minaret*, p. 33.

[321] Al-Tirmidhī uses the term "*qawm*" (folk) in the phrase "*manāzil al-qawm*" to talk about the stations of the path. The use of the word *qawm* (folk) in this way is used in later Sufism as another way of identifying the Ṣūfīs. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 153. Al-Tirmidhī uses the term *ṭarīq* (way) similar to the manner of the later Ṣūfīs as well. In *SA* he writes about those who pretend to know the path (*ṭarīq*) of the *awliyāʾ*: *wa lā huwa ʿālim bi al-ṭarīq wa lā bi al-makāmin fī al-ṭarīq wa lā bi muntahā al-qawm wa manāzilihim*, "…and he is not knowledgeable of the path nor the ambushes of the path nor does he know the goal of this folk (*qawm*) and their halting stations." Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 30. More similarities to later Sufism abound in al-Tirmdihī's writings such as his attendance at gatherings of *dhikr* and his discussion of some aspects of *samāʾ* (audition). Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 1, p. 243; vol. 2, pp. 23–24; vol. 5, pp. 6–7. We will discuss further structural similarities between al-Tirmidhī's mystical terminology and the terminology of later Sufism at a later point in this chapter. We intend to show that al-Tirmidhī's terminology includes elements that Baghdād Sufism did not include but that were adopted in what later became mature Sufism.

[322] Ibid. *Rasāʾil al-Junayd*, pp. 66–67.

[323] Al-Qushayrī mentions several different viewpoints on *zuhd* (renunciation) and then quotes his teacher al-Sulamī to the effect that *zuhd* does not mean "eating course food or wearing a woolen cloak." ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Hawāzin al-Qushayrī. *Al-Qushayrī's epistle on Sufism al-risala al-qushayriyya fī ʿilm al-taṣawwuf*. Translated by Alexander D. Knysh; reviewed by Muḥammad Eissa. Reading, U.K.: 2007, pp. 134–135.

was accessible to aspirants of a variety of different backgrounds and adherents who were associated with many different schools (*madhāhib*) of thought in Sunnī Islam. If we contemplate the diverse, institutionalized and theoretically grounded mysticism of Khurāsān and Transoxania before the arrival of Baghdād Sufism, we find that Baghdād Sufism entered a highly developed matrix of mystical thought and activity. To posit that Baghdād Sufism replaced these movements completely ignores the composite nature of Sufism as we find it in its mature form. The field of Islamic mysticism must not underestimate the heritage Sufism owes to Khurāsānian mysticism.

Sufism and Hellenism

In Chapter 2 we discussed the extent to which al-Tirmidhī makes use of Hellenistic thought. The Pythagorean elements we find in al-Tirmidhī's works, especially *KH*, do not represent, by any means, the entirety of al-Tirmidhī's mystical outlook. Rather, al-Tirmidhī uses wisdom (*ḥikma*) to frame and situate his doctrine of sainthood (*walāya*). By looking at Christian mysticism and its structural foundations during the same general historical period as al-Tirmidhī, we see how al-Tirmidhī belongs within a broadly defined tradition of mystical thought indigenous to the Near East. We will look briefly at the work of two Christian writers, the first being Isaac of Nineveh from the 7th-century C.E. and the second, Yaḥyā b. ʿĀdī, from the 10th-century C.E., one preceding al-Tirmidhī by several hundred years and the other following closely after him. This will help to demonstrate how Islamic mysticism contrasts more clearly when compared to a similar and competing mystical tradition in the same general area and time frame. As we mentioned earlier, Isaac of Nineveh is particularly helpful to our understanding of early Islamic mysticism because he is credited with writing a number of ascetical homilies during the period just after the great Arab conquests of the 7th-century C.E. His writings demonstrate in

lucid detail the ascetical and mystical quest of someone who we can easily say was not influenced by Islamic thought.[324] Yaḥyā b. ʿĀdī, on the other hand, was a participant in the active intellectual milieu of Baghdād during the 10th-century C.E. but had clearly inherited the legacy of Christian mystical thought of which Isaac was a part.

Patrik Hagman demonstrates that Isaac was in conversation with a Christian theological tradition that drew heavily from Neoplatonism. The problematique that Isaac, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Evagrios, and John of Apamea were attempting to solve returned back to the Neoplatonic notion of the soul (*nous*) as an uncreated substance. These early Christian ascetics and theologians were trying to reconcile the existence of passions with a Hellenistic concept of the soul as incorruptible and uncreated.[325] This notion of an uncreated soul whose source in the Godhead is modeled after the Platonic Good or Aristotle's Unmoved Mover is an emanationist cosmology and was readily accepted by many early Christian theologians as part of their basic *weltanschauung*. This cosmological doctrine is also clearly found among Neoplatonic and Aristotelian Muslim philosophers such as al-Fārābī[326], Ibn Sīna[327], al-Rāzī[328] and al-Rushd[329] among others.[330] The question before us, however, is whether or not the early Islamic mystics participated in this discourse stream that was active from the 7th-century C.E. onwards in Iraq and greater Khurāsān. Louis Massignon's work on Ṣūfī terminology indicates that Sufism in its mature form derives its terminology as well as its basic premises primarily from the Qurʾān.[331]

[324] For the first hundred or so years after the Arab/Islamic invasions of the 7th-century, the Arab Muslims concentrated their efforts on expansion and Arab Muslims lived in garrison towns separate from the people they ruled.
[325] Hagman, Patrik. *The asceticism of Isaac of Nineveh*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2010, pp. 75–76.
[326] Abū Naṣr Muḥammad al-Fārābī (d. 339/950)
[327] Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn b. Sīna (d. 428/1037)
[328] Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Rāzī (d. 313/925 or 323/935)
[329] Abū al-Walīd b. Rushd (d. 595/1198)
[330] Al-Ghazālī seeks to refute the doctrine of the Falāsifa (philosophers) concerning the uncreated soul in his *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*. Ibn Rushd responds to his refutation with a refutation of his own, *al-Radd ʿalā al-Radd*.
[331] Ibid. *Sufism a global history*, pp. 26–27.

While this might be true in general, one can see many similarities that also connect Ṣūfī thought and practice to pre-Islamic precedents.[332] Some scholars of Sufism have referred to these similarities as 'floating motifs' or a shared koine that is difficult to link to any particular 'borrowing.'[333] It is no doubt that the early Ṣūfīs participated in this koine as did all of the major Islamic movements of the first three Islamic centuries. However, while there are clearly outward semblances, the deep structure of Ṣūfī thought appears to be molded by a consistent return to Islamic sources in the form of Qurʾān and Ḥadīth for justification of its doctrines. This can be apparent by looking closely at those Muslim mystics whose thought closely resembles aspects of Hellenism. One case in point are the ideas of a Basran mystic by the name of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896) who was contemporaneous with al-Tirmidhī and who also discussed *walāya* (sainthood). Gerhard Böwering in his masterful work on the mystical vision of Sahl al-Tustarī interprets al-Tustarī's treatment of the soul in terms of Neoplatonic emanation.[334] Indeed, on the surface, al-Tustarī's cosmogony looks emanationist. God creates Muḥammad from his light after which Adam and his progeny, as well as the entire universe, is then created from the Muḥammadan light.[335] This is a cosmogony that is also shared by al-Tirmidhī. Bernd Radtke refers to it as the 'Old Islamic Cosmology.' Al-Tustari's cosmogony seems to mirror Neoplatonic emanation in which Intellect (Nous) proceeds from the One and the individual human souls subsequently proceed from Intellect. These individual souls are immersed in Matter and are a less perfect image of the intellection of Nous.[336] They are directly connected to the

[332] The term Ṣūfī, for example, has been traced back to early Christian ascetics in Iraq who were labeled "*lābis al-ṣūf*" or "wool wearer." It is highly probable that Muslim ascetics developed similar ascetic practices in competition with these Christian ascetics. Ibid, pp. 19–20.
[333] Ibid, p. 21.
[334] Böwering, Gerhard. *The mystical vision of existence in classical Islam the Qurʾānic hermeneutics of the ṣūfī Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 1979, p. 153.
[335] Ibid, p. 153.
[336] The European Graduate School. Online resource: http://www.egs.edu/library/plotinus/biography/

'One' through the intermediary of the Intellect.[337] The Neoplatonic soul is noetic, that is, it emanates directly from the Intellect, which itself is a form that comprises all possible forms.[338] The return of the soul to its source in Nous is often characterized as a mystical ascent and became an important element of Gnostic speculation, which borrowed heavily from Neoplatonic cosmology.[339] For al-Tustarī, the *ʿaql* of each human being does not emanate from the Muḥammadan light but is 'created' by God from that light.[340] The soul (*nafs*), on the other hand, in al-Tustarī's framework is actually created from the temporal world.[341] For al-Tustarī, the sublimation of the lower self and the plunging of the self into the 'earth' as if to bury it (note here the theme of death) results in the ascension of the *rūḥ* (spirit) or *rūḥ al-nafs* (spirit of the soul) to the Throne of God. However, as we will see with al-Tirmidhī, this same separation of the soul as earthly and the *rūh* (spirit) as heavenly is what creates a 'space' in the heart for the divine light to manifest. The point for both al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī is not a 'return' to union with God as we see stylized by Christian ascetics like Isaac of Nineveh, but rather the formation of a break in the fabric of the temporal world out of which the divine theophany manifests.[342] We also see that in al-Tustarī's view the *ʿuqūl* (intellects) that are specks of light also do not emanate, but they are each created separately by the Creator/God directly from the greater

[337] Magic Medicine and Science Course Homepage. Online resource: http://ls.poly.edu/~jbain/mms/handouts/mmsplotinus.htm
[338] Plotinus uses a light metaphor to explain how the soul is like a window for the Intellect to shine into the physical world. Plotinus, Enneads: http://classics.mit.edu/Plotinus/enneads.mb.txt
[339] This should not mislead us into assuming that Gnostics were merely Christian Neoplatonists. This was far from the case and Neoplatonic philosophers such as Plotinus and Porphyry took pains to distinguish themselves from the Gnostics, particularly because the Gnostics held to a radically dualistic cosmology that was foreign to Neoplatonism.
[340] Al-Tustarī's cosmogony seeks to answer the central question of *qadar* (free will) in Islamic theology, a problem that became central to Islamic theology based on Qurʾānic claims about the nature of God and his all-powerful and all-knowing attributes.
[341] Al-Tustarī, Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh. *Tafsīr al-Tustarī* translated by Annabel Keeler and ʿAlī Keeler. Fons Vitae, Louisville. 2011, p. 314. Ṣurāh 110:2. The self (*nafs*) desires this world because it is from this world. The spirit (*rūh*) desires the next world because it is from the next world.
[342] Tustarī, Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh. *Tafsīr al-Tustarī*. Ed. and Muḥammad Bāsil ʿUyūn al-Sūd. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya. 2002, p. 159.

Muḥammadan soul. In the Neoplatonic view individual souls are not only immaterial but also uncreated, which further separates al-Tustarī's concept of the soul from a Neoplatonic one. In fact, al-Tustarī's cosmogony is more of an attempt to systematize various disparate statements in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature that talk about the intellect, soul and the Muḥammadan light.[343] The entire thrust of al-Tustarī's discussion on the soul addresses a problematique that arises out of various positions espoused by early Islamic theological doctrines.[344] As Douglas Crow has aptly shown, the mythic *ʿaql* narratives of the Ḥadīth literature that focus on the *Mīthāq* (divine covenant) grow out of early Islamic theological debates over freewill (*qadar*) and predestination (*jabr*).[345] Crow demonstrates, contrary to Ignaz Goldziher, that the *ʿaql* of the Iraqi Qadarīs was not a Neoplatonic 'First Emanation.' The Ḥadīth corpus represents a measure of both continuity and rupture with Hellenistic, Patristic and Biblicist precedents.[346] Scholars like al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī in the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.), who sought to systematize both Qurʾān and Ḥadīth statements into a coherent cosmology, created systems of thought founded on a very different episteme than the episteme that governed early Patristic thought. While the terminology and structure of some early Islamic mystical motifs resemble pre-Islamic precedents and were no doubt influenced by them, the episteme inaugurated by Qurʿān and Ḥadīth culture realigned

[343] In the Qurʾān the Prophet Muhammad is understood by most exegetes to be referred to as a light. In Qurʾān 5:15 we have the words … *qad jāʾakum min Allāhi nūrᵘⁿ wa-kitābun mubīn*, "…there has come to you from Allāh a light and a clear book." The word *nūr* (light) is interpreted in *al-Jalālayn* to be a reference to Muḥammad. In Qurʾān 7:172 we have a verse that refers to extracting of the progeny of Adam from his loins to testify to Allāh's lordship. There is a linguistic relationship between the Qurʾānic term *dhurriyyāt* (offspring) and the term al-Tustarī uses *dharrāt* (specks). Both attain from the same Arabic root. Also, the idea that the Muḥammadan light was created from God's light originates in a *ḥadīth* attributed to Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 78/698). This *ḥadīth* is considered fabricated (*mawḍūʿ*) by Ḥadīth specialists, however, it is clear that al-Tustarī is developing his cosmogony, not from a Neoplatonic philosophical approach, but rather from Qurʾān and prophetic traditions that he is piecing together into a single narrative. Whether or not these Ḥadīth have their origin in Neoplatonic speculation is another question that cannot be answered here.

[344] The context of al-Tustarī's discussion on the primordial covenant is an explanation of *shaqāwa* (damnation) and *saʿāda* (felicity). Ibid. *Tafsīr al-Tustarī (2)*, p. 68.

[345] Crow, Douglas S. *The role of ʿaql in early Islamic wisdom, with reference to Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq*. Diss. McGill University, Montreal, P.Q. 1996, p. xxv.

[346] Ibid, p. xvii.

these motifs to produce very different significations. This orientation towards intellectual history is one of the benefits of Foucault's episteme. The discourse stream of Islamic mysticism is apparent in the many similarities that we find between al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī. Al-Tirmidhī describes the soul as being tripartite with the *ʿaql* situated in the head, the *hawā* (caprice) situated in the bowels and the heart situated between both of these, and it is in the heart where the light of God's gnosis is placed.[347] This tripartite structure mirrors the tripartite structure of the soul in Plato's *Timaeus* and was upheld by later Neoplatonists such as Apuleius of Madauros (mid-120s-after 170 C.E.).[348] In the *Timaeus* Plato describes the soul as having three parts, the rational portion in the head, the spirited portion near the heart and the appetitive in the lower bowels.[349] While it would seem that al-Tirmidhī is following a Neoplatonic vision of the soul, when we look closer at the underlying structure of al-Tirmidhī's notion of the soul, we find that it runs contrary to the very foundations of Neoplatonism. Al-Tirmidhī conceives of the soul as created from clay and was placed in the bowels by the Devil.[350] Furthermore, the heart is not the locus for the spiritual soul but rather a site for the manifestation of God's light or gnosis. Al-Tirmidhī's spiritual anatomy presents a way of setting up his non-dual epistemology and ontology so that it is framed by the dualities that constitute this world (*dunyā*) and make it understandable to the intellect. We will revisit al-Tirmidhī's non-dual gnoseology and interpretation of sainthood in chapters 5 and 6. Yves Marquet provides a lengthy comparison of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of light to that of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā and concludes that it is essentially

[347] Radtke, Bernd. "A Forerunner of Ibn ʿArabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood." *Journal of the Muḥyiddin Ibn ʿArabī Society*, Vol. VIII, 1989. Online resource: http://www.ibnarabisociety.org/articles/hakimtirmidhi.html. Accessed: 20 December 2014.
[348] Finamore, John F. "The Tripartite Soul in Middle Platonism" in *Conversations Platonic and Neoplatonic*. Academia Verlag. 2010, p. 105.
[349] Ibid, p.105.
[350] Ibid. *A Forerunner*. A conception of the soul as originating in a material substance could not be farther from the Neoplatonic idea of soul.

non-Hellenistic in its complete disregard for any attempt to systematize an original source of "light" to other than God himself.[351] The conclusion of Radtke that al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology is not Neoplatonic is supported by Marquet's findings as well as my own. The light mysticism that al-Tirmidhī uses derives from a discourse stream of Islamic mystical thought that developed during the 2nd- Islamic century (8th-century C.E.) and the first half of the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.). We can see this in the way al-Tirmidhī draws upon the same light cosmology as al-Tustarī. The fact that they both are working from similar material indicates that this light cosmology predates them both.

Early Sufism

Our discussion of the various sources of Hellenism and Sufism has helped us to understand why it can be difficult to identify the foundational elements that are structuring the thought of early Islamic mystics. This does not deny the variety of non-Islamic influences that were omnipresent in the context of these mystics, however, it helps to situate them in relation to a new center within the discursive topography of Near Eastern movements. When the center of the episteme shifts, we have a rupture in the intellectual landscape, a break that reconfigures the relationships between the various discourse streams. If we look at asceticism/mysticism in the Near East as an element of Near Eastern thought and practice that predates Islam, then the arrival of the Islamic revelation and the prophetic Ḥadīth definitely represents a rupture in that episteme and a recentering. Early Islamic mystics were almost without exception Traditionist[352] in their approach, that is, they were Muslims from the scholarly class who saw the Ḥadīth as a primary

[351] Ibid. *Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī et Neoplatonisme*, p. 43.
[352] As opposed to Traditionalist, which represents an anti-theological trend in Islam.

source for their views.[353] The Ṣūfīs of Baghdād as well as other ascetic/mystical movements were seeking to legitimize as well as articulate their experiences through the Qurʾānic and Ḥadīth corpus. Hence, Muslim mystics in both Baghdād and Khurāsān were writing for the scholarly class, both mystic and non-mystic alike. Al-Sarrāj, in his *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ*, uses the central Gabriel *ḥadīth*[354] to situate Sufism as the epitome of the Islamic sciences (*ʿulūm*), characterizing Sufism as the science of *iḥsān* (beauty, excellence), the third and final stage of spiritual attainment mentioned in this *ḥadīth*. While al-Tirmidhī was not defending 'Sufism' in the same way as al-Sarrāj, he was arguing for the primacy of the path of gnosis (*ṭarīq al-maʿrifa*) by appealing to Qurʾān and Ḥadīth sources almost a hundred years before al-Sarrāj. The ascension of the Ḥadīth dominance is unmistakably obvious in both of their approaches.

Also during the 9th-century C.E. and simultaneous with the ascension of the Ḥadīth folk, al-Muḥāsibī develops a sophisticated psychology of introspection.[355] Al-Muḥāsibī's concept of the soul breaks from a more ancient Arabian notion of the soul as synonymous with *ʿaql*.[356] This notion of the soul (*nafs*) combines Neoplatonic and Patristic notions of the soul within an Arab/Islamic framework. The episteme shift represented by Ḥadīth dominance reconfigured these notions based on a new reference point. While the soul is the vehicle by which to reach God, this soul does not seek 'union' with God, but rather seeks the manifestation of God's presence and attributes in the world.[357] For Aristotle, the soul is primarily a passive element,

[353] Silvers, Laury. *A Soaring Minaret*. State University of New York Press. Albany, NY. 2010, p. 2. Silvers argues that Sufism developed in a milieu that can best be characterized as an Ahl al-Ḥadīth (party of Ḥadīth) *culture*.
[354] Ibid. *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ*, p. 6. This *ḥadīth* is considered by Muslim legal scholars to be one of the central *aḥadīth* to Islamic lore and doctrine.
[355] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, pp. 44–45.
[356] Ibn ʿAbbās considers *nafs* (soul) and *ʿaql* (intellect) to be synonymous. Picken, Gavin N. *Spiritual purification in Islam: the life and works of al-Muḥāsibī*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. 2011, p. 173.
[357] The discussion on 'union' (*jamʿ*) is an example of what I believe is a misreading of early Ṣūfī mystical terminology. The discussion in al-Junayd's mystical treatises on *jamʿ* (I prefer gatheredness rather than 'union') and *tafriqa* (separation) must be understood within the paradigm of *ḥikma* as discussed in Chapter 2. This was a vocabulary that described the interaction of opposites in the world. Al-Tirmidhī engages in a similar discussion of

while for the Neoplatonists the soul has both an active and passive nature.[358] Even so, the active nature of the soul for the Neoplatonists was active in a subconscious manner, that is, the intellection of the soul is always and constantly happening through the soul's actualization of the forms of matter in the 'mind' of the soul.[359] Early Arab/Islamic notions of the *ʿaql* (mind/soul), on the other hand, were preoccupied with *qadar* (freewill) and *jabr* (predestination). While Neoplatonism was concerned with epistemology, or how we know what we know, al-Muḥāsibī focuses on intentionality (*irāda*) as a focal point for the development of the soul/self (*tazkiyat al-nafs*). Hence, again, the context of al-Muḥāsibī's thought must be situated within the frame of the intentionality of actions that will lead one either to salvation (*saʿāda*) or damnation (*shaqāwa*). For al-Muḥāsibī the path of *tazkiya* is a path of purification that leads ultimately to sincerity of intention while opposing its opposite, i.e., *riyāʾ* (showing off or intending one's worship for other than God), which is the primary sin in al-Muḥāsibī's spiritual regime.[360]

Al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī Build on the Work of al-Muḥāsibī

We will now be looking at how al-Muḥāsibī's concept of the soul, as configured and modified by the discourse stream of Ḥadīth dominance, informed the thought of both al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī. This is important because it highlights the complicated and non-linear development of Ṣūfī thought. We can view al-Muḥāsibī's discussion of the soul as a departure from previous modes of thinking about the soul in Islamic mystical discourse. Particular individuals who followed after him and internalized his teachings (specifically al-Junayd and al-

opposites being gathered and separated. This vocabulary provided the framework for understanding how God's theophany manifests in the world.

[358] Remes, Paulina. *Neoplatonism*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2008, p. 138.

[359] Ibid, p. 137.

[360] Ibid. *Spiritual purification*, p. 205.

Tirmidhī here) became the theoretical progenitors of what was to become Sufism in its mature form.[361] Al-Junayd lived in Baghdād and was the only one of the early Baghdād Ṣūfīs to admit a debt to al-Muḥāsibī.[362] While al-Tirmidhī did not meet al-Muḥāsibī, he records in his autobiography that it was one of the books of al-Anṭākī, the *rāwī* (narrator) of al-Muḥāsibī, that opened his spiritual insight.[363] We can see clearly from al-Junayd's writings that he borrowed from al-Muḥāsibī, whose influence extended his thought in important ways. Al-Junayd shared al-Muḥāsibī's basic methodology for refining the self, although he made it a lesser stage in the process of spiritual realization. Al-Junayd compares two terms in his *Rasāʾil* (*Letters of al-Junayd*); they are: *ṣidq* (truthfulness) and *ikhlāṣ* (sincerity). For al-Junayd, *ikhlāṣ* is higher than *ṣidq*, and *ṣidq* entails, *al-qiyām ʿalā al-nafs bi-l-ḥarāsati wa-l-riʿāyati lahā*, "…gaining control over the *nafs* through constant observation and watchfulness of it." Here, al-Junayd uses the exact same terms to refer to the very same methodology presented by al-Muḥāsibī. For al-Junayd, however, we should note that he refers to *ṣidq* (truthfulness) as a lower station and then continues to explain how *ikhlāṣ* is yet a higher station of spiritual attainment. Al-Junayd described *ikhlās* (sincerity) as a characteristic of *walāya* (sainthood) that is granted unto the believer by God. In al-Junayd's mystical system, the one characterized by sincerity goes beyond *ʿaql* (intellect), a movement that is not particularly clear in the works of al-Muḥāsibī. Al-Junayd says, *fa ʿinda wuṣūl al-ʿabdi ilā hādhā kharaja ʿan ṣifati wujūdi mā yūṣafu bi-l-ʿaql fa-ṣārat ʿawāriḍ al-ʿaql ʿinda wujūd haqīqati al-tawḥīd wasāwis taḥtāju ilā an yaruddahā…*, "When the servant reaches this [point], he leaves the attribute of the existence of that which can be

[361] Alexander Knysh (2011) discusses al-Muḥāsibī's Ṣūfī credentials and notes that some have interpreted him as a 'moralizing theologian' rather than as a Ṣūfī. Nevertheless, the importance of his approach to spiritual purification on later Sufism is undisputed. Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, p. 47.
[362] Ibid, p. 53.
[363] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 17.

described by the intellect and [for him] the effulgences of the intellect [standing] before the existence of the reality of oneness are but disturbances that need to be repelled."[364] Here we can see a more developed presentation of the *ʿaql*, not simply as that which represents a capacity to understand God, but rather a faculty that reflects the world and gives rise to 'thoughts'. For al-Junayd it is not enough for the servant (*ʿabd*) to orient himself toward God with his intellect, but rather, true realization is to go beyond the *ʿaql* itself and thus beyond form (*rasm*). This does not happen as a result of the ability of the servant, but through the servant's *khuṣūṣiyya* (being chosen) by God. The servant is taken beyond his intellect by the overpowering nature of God's presence. Not only does al-Junayd build upon the methodological foundation established by al-Muḥāsibī, but he introduces some important transformations. While al-Muḥāsibī calls for the servant to turn away from and thus ignore the *nafs*, al-Junayd calls for its *fanā'* (annihilation). Al-Junayd says, *fa-lammā faqadat al-arwāḥ al-naʿīm al-ghaybī alladhī lā tuḥāssuhu an-nufūs wa-lā tuqāribuhu al-ḥusūs alifat fanāhā ʿanhā wa wujidat baqāhā yamnaʿuhu fanāhā*, "and when the spirits lose the hidden pleasure which souls do not sense nor do feelings come near, their annihilation from them (their *nufūs*) becomes habitual and their state of subsistence, which annihilation had blocked, arises."[365] For al-Junayd, the concept of sobriety (*saḥw*), a characteristic coterminous with *baqāʾ* (subsistence), is built on the idea that spiritual practice is primarily an inward discipline that results from the annihilation (*fanāʾ*) of the soul as it is directed towards the contemplation of God. In other words, it is al-Muḥāsibī's radical interiorization of the ascetic path that al-Junayd is refining.[366] We call al-Muḥāsibī's mystical

[364] Ibid. *Rasāʾil*, p. 53.
[365] Ibid, p. 34.
[366] I agree with Nile Green who states that Islamic mysticism was as much a reaction against asceticism as it was influenced by early Christian and Muslim asceticism. Islamic mysticism grows out of a dialog among the Ḥadīth folk about the place of asceticism in Islam. Al-Muḥāsibī's approach can be characterized as an inward asceticism or an asceticism of the soul (*nafs*) from its attachments to the world and its desires and a turning (*tawba*) towards God. Al-Junayd adopts al-Muḥāsibī's 'asceticism of the soul' but does not completely disown asceticism of the body.

approach 'radical interorization' because he appears to call for an 'asceticism of the soul' as opposed to an 'asceticism of the body'. For al-Muḥāsibī, strictures of the body don't cure the evil inclinations of the soul and in this we can see an important departure from early Christian asceticism. For example, this differs markedly from the approach of Isaac of Nineveh, whose asceticism directly links the mortification of the body with the spiritual ascent of the soul.[367] Al-Muḥāsibī's logic goes as follows: When the *ʿaql* continuously watches over (*muḥāsaba*) the soul for occurrences of ostentation (*riyāʾ*), the soul gradually leaves ostentation and begins beholding God himself. Al-Muḥāsibī's spiritual regimen leads the mystic to the point of witnessing God. For al-Muḥāsibī, the highest level of spiritual attainment is *tawakkul* (complete reliance upon God).[368] At this level of spiritual attainment the seeker of God does not see anything but God, and is even oblivious to his own self. At the end of *Ādāb al-Nufūs* Al-Muḥāsibī states, *wa-l-mutawakkil ʿalā Allāh lā yaltafitu ilā al-dunyā li-annahu lā yarāhā li-nafsihi khaṭar*^{an}*, wa-lā yarāha wa-nafsahu wa-jamīʿa mā fīhā illā Allāh…*,[369] "The reliant one does not turn his attention to this world, because he does not see his very soul even as a single thought, and he does not see it nor his soul, nor all that is in it, save God..." We can see from this quote from *Ādāb al-Nufūs* that full realization requires the mystic to lose sight of his self (*nafs*) in the vision of God. This 'forgetting' of the self/soul is clearly a precursor to al-Junayd's annihilation (*fanāʾ*) of the self/soul. Al-Junayd takes this process of refinement even further to the point where all oppositions and points of reference are lost and the mystic is annihilated in the divine presence (*fanāʾ*). According to al-Junayd, the path (*ṭarīq*) does not stop there, but the mystic then recovers from this spiritual death to subsist (*baqāʾ*) in God, which he considers a higher station than

[367] Ibid. *Mystic treatises*, p. 5.
[368] Ibid. *Ādāb al-Nufūs*, p. 180.
[369] Ibid, p. 179.

annihilation. For al-Junayd, the mystic journey is not simply a process of refinement and accounting for one's actions (*muḥāsaba*) and witnessing (*mushāhada*), but it is a process of the mystic himself becoming the site of God's manifesting presence. While the approaches of al-Muḥāsibī and al-Junayd express a new way of discoursing about the path (*ṭarīq*) to God by focusing on the vehicle of the soul, neither of these two theoreticians of Islamic mysticism invest the mystic with religious authority as a result of his sainthood (*walāya*). For both of them the saint (*walī*) is someone who is a source of guidance (*hidāya*) for others and is protected by God, but is not a *khalīfa* (successor to the Prophet or to God).[370]

Al-Muḥāsibī's inward spiritual psychology gave him the theoretical basis to criticize bodily asceticism as a viable path to reach God. Al-Junayd was not the only mystic who inherited and built upon the ideas of al-Muḥāsibī. Al-Muḥāsibī's views on the soul were also inherited by al-Tirmidhī who voices a very similar condemnation of ascetical practice and motives along the same lines. Al-Tirmidhī's process of *tazkiya* as he expounds it in *SA* follows al-Muḥāsibī's lead. Al-Tirmidhī's inward asceticism of the soul ends in *walāya*. We can see that al-Muḥāsibī begs the question "To what end?" in his intricate moral psychology and we find that both al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī proffer two very different answers to this question. The two divergent approaches of both al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī were then eventually incorporated into the great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century by al-Sulamī and his student al-Qushayrī. We would like to put forward the proposition that Sufism in its mature form is a product greater than the sum of its parts and constitutes a synthesis of various mystical approaches, such as elements

[370] Ibid. *Rasāʾil*, p. 20. The saints (*awliyāʾ*) do not figure prominently in al-Muḥāsibī's spiritual hierarchy. Rather, it is the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) who play an important role as knowers of God (*ʿārifīn*). Al-Junayd mentions the *awliyāʾ* more frequently but even for him the term *awliyāʾ* is one of many descriptors of the knowers of God.

of al-Muḥāsibī's spiritual psychology, filtered through the thought of mystics like al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī, who built upon his radical interiorization of the spiritual path.

Nīshāpūr and the Development of Sufism as a Meta-Identity

In order to understand Sufism in the 5th/11th-century we need to move from Baghdād, where al-Muḥāsibī and al-Junayd were operative, to Khurāsān and, in particular, the city of Nīshāpūr. Khurāsān was a crucible for the continued sustainability of what different factions within Islam were calling *Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamāʿa* (the people of sunna and community). As we will see with the case study of Nīshāpūr during this period, Sunnīsm as an orthodoxy was not a forgone conclusion at the beginning of the 11th-century C.E. A crumbling Abbasid state, a schism between East and West, invasions of Turkic tribes from Central Asia and social and economic divisions that threatened to tear apart the fabric of urban life all militated against a collective spirit that would bind Muslims together.

Nīshāpūr was the cultural and intellectual capital of Khurāsān in the 10th- and 11th-centuries C.E. As we have seen with the Ṣūfī authors already discussed, the majority of these authors hailed from Nīshāpūr, either travelled through it, or at some point studied there. Richard Bulliet's study of the patrician class of this important city helps us to better understand the internal workings of this medieval Muslim city in Khurāsān.[371] More importantly for us, the political and social dynamics of Nīshāpūr during this period will also help us to better understand what was taking place in the development of Sufism at the same time. Rather than looking at

[371] Bulliet correctly warns us from extrapolating our understanding of Nīshāpūr to other urban centers in Khurāsān. Ḥanafīs in Nīshāpūr meant something quite different than Ḥanafīs in Samarqand. Despite the rivalries and factional conflicts between Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs we see that the educational system remained unified and did not break up into two separate schooling systems.

Sufism as a factor in the factional strife in Nīshāpūr[372] during the 5th/11th-century, we can view the development of Sufism in Nīshāpūr during this historical period as a possible reaction to this factionalism and strife and as a vote of no-confidence in a system that was broken and eventually led to the destruction of the city.

The origins of the struggle between Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs in Nīshāpūr predate our period of inquiry, starting as early as the 3rd/9th-century. It is at the end the 4th- Islamic century (10th-century C.E.) that factional violence begins with the adoption of Ashʿarī theology, adopted solely by Shāfiʿīs. We can think of Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs as much as political parties as they are legal schools during this period.[373] Shāfiʿī ideology was more 'progressive' in the sense that it supported new trends in society such as mysticism and semi-determinism. Ḥanafī ideology, at least in Nīshāpūr, was more aristocratic and conservative and was connected with Muʿtazilī theology.[374] In Transoxania, where al-Tirmidhī lived, the situation was much different with Ḥanafīs primarily adhering to a Murjiʾī/Ḥanafī theology. The divide between Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs in Nīshāpūr appears to have been the outward manifestation of deeper social divisions amongst the leading aristocratic families.[375] A series of factors led to an upset in the balance of

[372] Margaret Malamud casts the Ṣūfīs of Nīshāpūr as primarily Shāfiʿīs. The Shāfiʿīs were considered to be less aristocratic and more open to new trends leading them to try out Sufism. There are several problems, however, with Malamud's interpretation of the usage of the term *al-ṣūfī* in al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī's *Tārīkh Naysābūr*. The first consideration is the assumption that the term *ṣūfī* is used to specifically mean someone who associates with Baghdād Sufism. Rather, al-Naysābūrī seems to use the term to refer to mystics in general such as when he refers to al-Ḥākim al-Samarqandī, mentioned in Chapter 3 as a Ṣūfī. Al-Samarqandī had no known affiliation with the Baghdād Ṣūfīs and was a Ḥanafī theologian and mystic. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Ṣarīfīnī. *Al-Muntakhab Min Al-siyāq Li-tārīkh Naysābūr.* Ed. ʿAbd al-Ghāfir b. Ismāʿīl Fārisī al-Ṭabʿa. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīya. 1989, p. 73.
[373] This speaks to the importance of conceiving of these categories as constructed identities. One finds in the *ṭabaqāt* literature, for example, a Ḥanafī Shāfiʿī. This would seem to be an oxymoron of sorts but what we find is that Shāfiʿī becomes identified with Ṣūfī and what is really meant here is a Ḥanafī Ṣūfī and not someone who is following two different legal schools at the same time. Ibid. *Patricians*, p. 41.
[374] Ibid, p. 36.
[375] We find that before Ḥanafī and Shāfiʿī identifications come into play by the middle of the 10th century a similar split along the lines of Kūfan and Madīnan *madhāhib* exists. In this period local dialect, history and customs constituted the core of an individual's identity which was overlain by a veneer of cosmopolitan religious practices and imperial administrative procedures. Ibid, p. 31.

power between patrician families who controlled the city. When the Ghaznavids replaced the Samānids as rulers of Nīshāpūr in 999 C.E. they sought to increase their control in the city by supporting various factions of the city against others. At the beginning of his reign, Maḥmūd of Ghazna officially endorsed Muʿtazilī theology as propounded by the Ḥanafī leadership of the city. Later he appointed a Karrāmī, Abū Bakr, as the *raʾīs* (mayor) of Nīshāpūr despite the fact that Karrāmīs were fanatically anti-Muʿtazilī. The result was a reign of terror in Nīshāpūr in which Ashʿarīs, Muʿtazilīs and Ismāʿīlīs were denounced from the pulpits of the mosques and attacked with impunity.[376] The Karrāmiyya derived the base of their support from the despised lower classes such as weavers and the urban and rural poor. They were highly organized and stressed moral and social reform. Needless to say, the appointment of a Karrāmī to a position of such importance in the city upended the balance of power that had existed amongst the patriciate. When the Seljuqs replaced the Ghaznavids in 1037 C.E. they continued the same policy of divide and conquer.[377] The Seljuq vizier ʿAmīd al-Mulk Kundūrī (d. 455/1063) instituted an inquisition of Shāfiʿī Ashʿarīs in which the Ashʿarī Ṣūfī al-Qushayrī was forced to flee Nīshāpūr.[378] The factional strife in Nīshāpūr kept spiraling downwards during the 11th-century C.E., climaxing in the devastation of the city by the Ghuzz and its eventual abandonment. A recurring question in Bulliet's work on Nīshāpūr is why the patriciate allowed such factional strife to escalate to the

[376] Margaret Malamud. "The Politics of Heresy in Medieval Khurāsān: The Karrāmiyya in Nīshāpūr". *Iranian Studies.* 27 (1/4): 1994, p. 46.

[377] In Medieval Muslim cities in greater Khurāsān during the 4th/10th- and 5th/11th-centuries the rulers needed the city more than the city needed the ruler. The traditional balance of power in the city between the various patrician families unwound as new rulers sought to increase their influence and power in the city. The social unrest that was the result of this policy had to do with a struggle for power and authority between a foreign ruler and a landed aristocratic class.

[378] It is not clear why al-Kundūrī instituted this inquisition of Ashʿarīs, whether it was for personal reasons or whether it was a Machiavellian attempt to reassert the balance of power between Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanafīs after Shāfiʿīs gained an inordinate share of control of the city in the aftermath of a regime change. Ibid. *A View from the edge*, p. 126.

point of self-destruction. The opposition between legal or even theological schools does not fully explain why Nīshāpūr could not solve its internal factionalism.

While Bulliet's work shows that Ḥanafī and Shāfiʿī were identifications that could mean more than simple affiliation to a legal school, Jacqueline Chabbi's work on the historical development of mystical movements in Khurāsān demonstrates the possibility that the identification 'Ṣūfī' used by al-Hakīm al-Naysābūrī (d. 405/1014) in his *Tārīkh Nīshāpūr,* in effect, referred to Malāmatīs who had consolidated under the banner of Sufism in a coalition against the Karrāmiyya.[379] The problem we face in trying to understand who the Ṣūfīs really were in Nīshāpūr during the 10th- and early 11th-centuries C.E. is that Ṣūfī histories and biographical dictionaries do not clearly coincide with the accounts of travelers and geographers. The geographer Shams al-Dīn al-Muqaddasī (d. 380/990), who visited Nīshāpūr in 374/984 near the end of his life, does not mention Ṣūfīs or Malāmatīs in his works but rather refers to pietists (*ʿubbād*) and renunciants (*zuhhād*).[380] The Karrāmiyya, on the other hand, do figure prominently in his descriptions of the various factional groups in the city. Similarly, the historian Abū Manṣūr al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037) is more concerned with anathematizing the Karrāmiyya than he is aware of Sufism.[381] The first 'Ṣūfī' to be mentioned in the biographical dictionaries of the scholars of Khurāsān is Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 320/932)[382] who was one of the only students of al-Junayd that we know of to have ventured eastward in the early part of the 10th-century C.E.[383] From his time onward we increasingly see the use of the term Ṣūfī to describe local *shaykhs* but

[379] Jacqueline Chabbi. "Remarques sur le développement historique des mouvements ascétiques et mystiques au Khurasan: IIIe/IXe siècle - IVe/Xe siècle". *Studia Islamica.* (46): 1977, p. 67.
[380] Sara Sviri. "Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism." *L.\ Lewisohn (ed.), Classical Persian Sufism*. 1993, p. 590.
[381] Ibid. "The Politics of heresy," p. 50.
[382] Ibid. *A Soaring Minaret*, p. 35.
[383] Ibid. "Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the malāmatī movement," p. 589.

never the term Malāmatī.[384] If Chabbi's assertion holds true, it means that the term Ṣūfī, like the legal affiliations mentioned previously, was a flexible identity that could be manipulated for various purposes even in Nīshāpūr during the 5th/11th-century. Before al-Qushayrī, we can see that Sufism may have served the purpose of uniting a local mystical movement relying for its support on the tradesmen fraternities of the bazaar. According to Chabbi, this may have occurred in the face of the rising threat of an ascetical/mystical movement (the Karrāmiyya) basing its strength on the urban poor and connections with the rural areas surrounding the city. In this process the value of *futuwwa* (often translated as 'chivalry') and the culture of the *fityān* (chivalrous youth) combine with a prestige and authority that was associated with Iraqi, and more specifically Baghdādī, credentials. We can think of Sufism in its Khurāsānian-inspired form as possibly Malāmatism with a Baghdādī veneer. While I do agree with the general thrust of Chabbi's hypothesis, I disagree that Sufism was a response to the Ḥanafī Karrāmiyya, primarily because the Shāfiʿī connection to Sufism is weak. Furthermore, Sufism in Nīshāpūr functioned as an identity that was inclusive of legal and theological allegiances within Sunnism. The spokesmen for this new form of mysticism were al-Sulamī and his student al-Qushayrī, both of whom stood at a crossroads in the history of Islamic mysticism. Before discussing the contributions of al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī, we will address two earlier defenders of Sufism, al-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī. Both of these individuals positioned Sufism as a *meta-madhhab*, or an approach that would encompass the various factionalisms that had developed among proto-Sunnīs. This idea of Sufism as a *meta-madhhab* carried over into the work of al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī who offered Sufism as a solution to the rampant factionalism that gripped their city of Nīshāpūr. Unfortunately, Sufism was not able to save Nīshāpūr, but it quickly spread to all

[384] Ibid, p. 589.

corners of the Muslim world within only a few centuries of its formulation by al-Sulamī and, in particular, al-Qushayrī.

Al-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī

Both Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988) and Abū Bakr al-Kalābādhī (d. 390/990) , wrote manuals on Sufism in the latter part of the 4th-Islamic century (10th-century C.E.) that are often viewed as apologetic, that is, they sought to attenuate Sufism to the palate of the *ʿulamāʾ* (scholarly class).[385] Green provides a different view arguing that since Ṣūfīs were from the scholarly class (both scholars of Ḥadīth and Fiqh), they did not really need an apologia, rather, their manuals were "manifestos" seeking to advertise a newcomer to the mystical scene of Khurāsān.[386] Both of these views see Sufism through a diffusion model in which Sufism was developed in Baghdād as a new kind of mystical piety that spread from this point outward. Yet, a diffusion model may not be the best model to explain such a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon as Sufism. We prefer here to use Foucault's concept of episteme and discourse, which we feel is more appropriate when discussing social and intellectual history. The question we would like to answer is: At what time did Sufism actually become a discourse stream? Or rather: When was it that Ṣūfīs were writing about themselves as a distinct identity as opposed to other identities within Islam? When we analyze al-Junayd's *Rasāʾil* we find no mention of the '*ṣufiyya*' or *taṣawwuf* (Sufism). Rather, what we find are descriptions of *awliyāʾ* (saints), *ḥukamāʾ* (wise men) and *ʿārifīn* (gnostics). These are all categories that are familiar to us in the works of al-Tirmidhī and other mystics of his generation such as al-Tustarī. We only find mention of Sufism by al-Junayd in statements attributed to him through individual reports and in

[385] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, pp. 120–123.
[386] Ibid. *Sufism a global history*, p. 52.

sections of later books that seek to bolster Sufism itself.[387] Nor do we see the term Sufism used by other authors of the eclectic group who were called Ṣūfīs in Baghdād except through the lens of later Ṣūfīs of the latter part of the 10th-century C.E.[388] It seems that Sufism was possibly a term others may have used to refer to the mystics of Baghdād during the 3rd- Islamic century (9th-century C.E.), first as a slightly pejorative term and then reclaimed as a catch-all term for Islamic mysticism in general. Furthermore, neither al-Sarrāj nor al-Kalābādhī saw Sufism as a purely Baghdād phenomenon.[389] Al-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī were not necessarily defending a particular 'school' of mysticism, but rather, were negotiating the place of Islamic mysticism within the larger Traditionist discourse stream of the Ḥadīth folk.[390] If we look at three individual mystics: al-Junayd, al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī, all of them were writing about topics related to Islamic mysticism somewhat independently around the same time, at the end of the 3rd/9th-century. Each of them was using his own unique terminology, however, we find that they were all concerned with the nature of knowledge and positioning the possessor of inward (*bāṭin*) knowledge above the one who possesses only outward (*ẓāhir*) knowledge. All of these individuals came from the scholarly religious class (*ʿulamāʾ*) and their reference to Qurʾān and Ḥadīth texts indicates that they were in discussion with the larger Traditionist discourse stream. Al-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī from the 4th- Islamic century (10th-century C.E.) were heir to this larger mystical discourse and it

[387] Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī in his short treatise *Masʾala fī Qawāʿid al-Taṣwwuf wa-Mabānīhā* attributes a number of traditions about the nature of *taṣawwuf* to al-Junayd but without any chain of transmitters (*asānīd*). Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Ismāʿīl b. Nujayd al-Naysābūrī al-Sulamī. *Masāʾil wa-taʾwīlāt al-ṣūfīya li-Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī: wa-yalīhī juzʾ min aḥādīṯ Ismāʿīl b. Nujayd al-Naysābūrī*. Ed. Ğirhaīd Böwering and Bilāl al-Orfālī. Bairūt: Dār al-Mašriq. 2010, pp. 1–2.

[388] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, p. 117.

[389] Ibid. *Kitāb al-lumaʿ*, p. 42. Al-Kalābādhī sees al-Tirmidhī as also an important figure in Sufism as well as other Khurāsānian ascetics and mystics.

[390] Lory, P. "al-Sarrāj." *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 20 August 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-sarra-d-j-SIM_6653>

is in this spirit that we can make better sense of their works, which pull from a number of disparate mystical trends. Al-Kalābādhī's *al-Taʿarruf li-Madhhab Ahl al-Taṣawwuf* is a case in point and we would like to show how his work weaves together Baghdād style mysticism with important mystical elements from greater Khurāsān, thereby developing a synthesis that laid the foundation for later Ṣūfīs to build upon.

Paul Nwiya divides al-Kalābādhī's main work on Sufism into three sections: a historical overview, apologetics seeking to promote Ḥanafī points of creed as being one and the same with the creed of the Ṣūfīs, and finally a description of the Ṣūfī mystical path.[391] Nwiya's discussion on the *Taʿrruf* is cursory at best and partly inaccurate. When reading the *Taʿrruf* carefully we can see that his creedal section does not simply echo tenets of *al-Fiqh al Akbar II* as Nwiya claims, but seeks to demonstrate the accord between the doctrine of the Ṣūfīs and both Māturīdī theology and some aspects of Ashʿarī theology.[392] Al-Kalābādhī's work most likely borrows its inspiration not from *al-Fiqh al-Akbar II*,[393] but from al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī's creedal work *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī is mentioned by name in the *Taʿarruf*, and the creedal points mentioned by al-Kalābādhī match with al-Samarqandī's creed very closely.[394] Al-Kalābādhī asserts that all of the major Ṣūfīs he mentions in the beginning of the *Taʿarruf* adhere to sixty-five points of Ḥanafī creed, a difficult argument to make given the diversity of figures

[391] P. Nwiya. "al-Kalābādhī." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 20 August 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-kalaba-d-h-i-SIM_3803> First appeared online: 2012.

[392] *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar II* is a Ḥanafī/Māturīdī text and has no relation to Ashʿarism.

[393] *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar II* was most likely written some time at the end of the 4th- Islamic century (10th-century C.E.) around the time of al-Kalābādhī's death.

[394] Out of approximately fifty points of doctrine mentioned in al-Kalābādhī's *Taʿarruf* forty of those match directly to points of doctrine in al-Samarqandī's *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. Of the ten that differ, the majority of these are points of doctrine that represent a more advanced stage in Ḥanafī/Māturīdī theology since al-Kalābādhī most probably wrote his *Taʿarruf* as much as half a century after al-Samarqandī wrote *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam*. See Appendix A for a comparison chart in Arabic.

mentioned, many of whom were non-Ḥanafīs. If we understand the milieu that al-Kalābādhī was writing in, we can assume that he was probably seeking to distinguish the '*ṣūfiyya*' from the ascetic 'wearers of wool' among the Karrāmiyya who were despised by the more learned scholarly class of Ḥanafīs. This context is significant because it also connects al-Kalābādhī in important ways to al-Tirmidhī who, as we demonstrated in Chapter 3, was an important figure in Ḥanafī theology. Al-Kalābādhī also includes two sections in his *Taʿarruf* that indicate a debt to al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmdhī's works. The first of the three sections of al-Kalābādhī's work discusses the nature of sainthood (*walāya*) and here al-Kalābādhī reproduces al-Tirmidhī's distinction between the "saints of God by right" (*awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh*) and the higher "saints of God" (*awliyāʾ Allāh*), a distinction unique to al-Tirmidhī. Al-Kalābādhī uses almost the exact same terminology as al-Tirmdhī.[395] Furthermore, al-Kalābādhī takes al-Tirmidhī's tripartite structure of knowledge and reproduces it in the *Taʿarruf*.[396] In addition to this, al-Tirmidhī is mentioned by al-Kalābādhī as one of those who wrote on Ṣūfī practice (*muʿāmalāt*).[397] If we are correct in understanding that

[395] Al-Kalābādhī writes, *al-wilāya wilāyatān wilāya takhruju min al-ʿadāwa wa-hiya li-ʿāmmati al-muʾminīn fa-hādhihi lā tūjibu maʿrifatihā wa-l-taḥaqquq bi-hā li-l-aʿyān lākin min jihat al-ʿumūm fa-yuqāl al-muʾmin walī Allāh wilāya ikhtiṣāṣ wa-iṣṭifāʾ wa-iṣṭināʿ wa-hādhihi tūjibu maʿrifatahā wa-l-taḥaqquqa bihā wa-yakūnu ṣāḥibuhā maḥfūẓun ʿan al-naẓar ilā nafsihi*, "Sainthood is of two types, a sainthood that arises out of enmity (*al-ʿadāwa*) and it is for the generality of believers, this kind does not necessitate knowledge of it (sainthood) and realization of it (sainthood) for those chosen, however for the most part it is said that the believer is a saint (*walī*) of Allāh with a specialized, chosen and prepared sainthood. [Then there is] this [other] type which requires knowledge of it (sainthood) and realization of it (sainthood) and the one who has it is protected from beholding his self." Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Kalābādhī. *Al-Taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-taṣawwuf: lawlā al-taʿarruf lamā ʿurifa al-taṣawwuf*. Bayrūt, Lubnān: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyya. 1980, pp. 82–83. This is precisely the distinction that al-Tirmidhī makes between *walī ḥaqq Allāh* and *walī Allāh*. Ibid. *Concept*, p. 43. Compare this to al-Tirmidhī's terminology in which he says, *al-wilāyatu ʿalā wajhayn, wilāyat^{un} yakhruju bihā al-ʿabdu min al-ʿadāwa wa-huwa wilāyat al-tawḥīd wa-wilāyatun yakhruju bihā min al-khiyāna fa-yakūna amīn^{an} min umanāʾ Allāh ʿazza wa-jall, qad jāhada nafsuhu fī dhāt Allāh ḥattā kaffa nafsahu wa-jawāriḥuhu al-sabʿa ʿan maḥārim Allāh taʿālā wa addā farāʾidahu fa-lazima ismu al-waraʿ*. "Sainthood is of two types, a sainthood by which the servant escapes from enmity (*al-ʿadāwa*) and it is the sainthood of affirming unity (*tawḥīd*) and [then there is] a sainthood by which he exits from treachery and he thus becomes a trustworthy one from among those who are trustworthy by God may he be exalted and glorified, he is one who has fought his lower self in the very self of Allah until he has pulled his lower self and its seven limbs away from those things prohibited by Allah most high and he has performed its duties and thus comes to deserve the name conscientious obedient." Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 141.

[396] Al-Tirmidhī's tripartite structure of knowledge: *ʿilm al-ẓāhir, ḥikma* and *maʿrifa* is reproduced by al-Kalābādhī in the *Taʿarruf*. Ibid. *Al-Taʿarruf*, pp. 100–101.

[397] Ibid, p. 30.

someone as central to the Ṣūfī canonical tradition as al-Kalābādhī uses al-Tirmidhī's construct of sainthood (*walāya*), as well as the structure of his gnoseology, it would follow that al-Tirmidhī was, indeed, integrated into the mainstream Ṣūfī tradition. What we hope to demonstrate in the next section is that it is not only al-Tirmidhī's notion of sainthood (*walāya*) that is integrated into Sufism in its mature form, but also his vision of religious authority as well. The great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century led by al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī fused Baghdād inspired Sufism with Malāmatī mysticism along with a gnoseology and saintology developed by al-Tirmidhī. This synthesis resulted in a product that imbued the *ʿulamāʾ* with a special kind of religious authority that demanded obedience to them even by the temporal rulers of their time. This was the vehicle that helped spread Sufism all over the Muslim world, particularly wherever the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* had gone.

Al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī

Al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī stood at the crossroads of Islamic civilization. Both of these scholars came from the city of Nīshāpūr and lived during the second half of the 10th-century C.E. and first part of the 11th-century C.E. Like al-Tirmidhī, they belonged to the patrician class of their city, their families were of noble Arab ancestry, and they owned land and engaged in scholarly pursuits. Both men traveled in search of knowledge, specifically to study Ḥadīth, and both belonged to the Shāfiʿī School of law (*madhhab*).[398] These men were connected by a similar culture of Arab identity within a Persian speaking milieu and Arabic textual tradition. They could both claim descent to the Arab tribe of Banī Sulaym, thus reinforcing their spiritual

[398] Gerhard Böwering. "Al-Sulamī." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 26 December 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-sulami-SIM_7147>

fraternity with ties of kinship. After al-Qushayrī's spiritual master passed away he took al-Sulamī as his master.[399] Both men were well situated to synthesize the various mystical trends that had developed in Iraq and greater Khurāsān. The city of Nīshāpūr where they both lived for most of their lives was on the Silk Road that passed through northern Iran and Central Asia, connecting Iraq to China in the Far East. Al-Sulamī received a *khirqa* (Ṣūfī cloak) from the Shāfiʿī Ṣūfī master, Abū al-Qāsim al-Naṣrābādhī (d. 367/977-8), however, his education was entrusted to his maternal grandfather, Abū ʿAmr Ismāʿīl b. Nujayd (d. 366/976-7), who was a disciple of Abū ʿUthmān al-Ḥīrī (d. 298/910), one of the important figures in the Malāmatī School.[400] Al-Sulamī consciously integrates Malāmatī figures into his *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* and he even wrote a treatise in which he describes the Malāmatiyya as of a higher spiritual rank than the Ṣūfīs.[401] In his *al-Risāla al-Malāmatiyya* al-Sulamī uses the term '*ṣūfī*' to describe the particular movement that originated in al-Junayd's circle in Baghdād, while in other contexts such as his *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya,* he uses the same term to refer more generally to a mystic of high spiritual rank, regardless of school.[402] This is significant because it means that al-Sulamī, like al-Kalābādhi and al-Sarrāj, is using the term '*ṣūfī*' as a general term for an Islamic mystic and is not representing a particular school of mystical thought. Our discussion of Sufism as a *meta-madhhab* brings up the question of its relationship to the other indigenous mystical schools operative in Nīshāpūr at the time, primarily the Malāmatiyya and the Karrāmiyya. Both Chabbi

[399] Ibid. *Entre soufisme et savoir islamique*, p. 61.
[400] De Jong, F. "Malāmatiyya". *EI2*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 27 December 2014 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/mala-matiyya-COM_0643>
[401] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, pp. 126–127.
[402] In his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* al-Sulamī uses the term '*ṣūfiyya*' to refer to both Baghdādī and Khurāsānī mystics, however in his *al-Risāla al-Malāmatiyya* he refers to the '*ṣūfiyya*' specifically as the Baghdādiyyūn. See al-Sulamī's introduction to his *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*: Muhammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī. *Kitāb ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya.* Ed. Johannes Pedersen. Leiden: E. J. Brill. 1960, p. 5. See also Abū al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī's work on the Malāmatiyya: Abū al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī. *Al-Malāmatīyah wa-al-sūfīyah wa-ahl al-futuwwah*. [Cairo]: ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī. 1975, p. 112.

and Knysh argue that Sufism replaced these indigenous mystical schools. If we view Sufism as the result of a mystical synthesis that took place in Nishapur during the 5th-Islamic century (11th-century C.E.), then we can say that, rather than replacing the Malāmatiyya and the Karrāmiyya, Nīshāpūrī Sufism was able to adapt to new contexts while these other schools were not. Rather than the Ṣūfīs replacing these groups, we find that the demise of the Karrāmiyya, for example, seems to coincide with general holocaust of the Mongol invasions of the 13th- and 14th-centuries C.E.[403] The Malāmatiyya have been more resilient than the Karramiyya, with offshoots of the movement surviving into the Ottoman period, however, traditional Malāmatism in its Khurāsānian form is also no longer detectable after the Mongol invasions.[404]

The introduction to al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* uses a style of language and terminology that is very close to that used by al-Tirmidhī. Al-Tirmidhī's ideas are quite unique as well as the terms he uses, and given that al-Sulamī was highly acquainted with his writings, it is fair to say that he could have taken inspiration for some aspects of his work *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* from al-Tirmidhī. The first biographical dictionary of Muslim 'mystics'[405] is not, in fact, al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt*, but rather the *History of the Shaykhs* (*Kitāb al-Mashāyikh*), no longer extant, that is attributed to al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and mentioned by al-Hujwīrī in his *Kashf al-*

[403] C.E. Bosworth. "Karrāmiyya." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 15 April 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/karramiyya-COM_0452>

[404] Ibid. "Malāmatiyya," *EI2*.

[405] It is not clear that mystics are meant by the title *mashāyikh*, a term that al-Tirmidhī only uses to refer to scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) and the one reference we find is negative referring to the scholars of outward knowledge who persecuted al-Tirmidhī in his city of Tirmidh. It is not clear though that this is the original title that al-Tirmidhī used and among Ḥanafīs of al-Hujwīrī's time period the term *mashāyikh* referred to 'authorities' but not necessarily mystics. However, given that almost all of al-Tirmidhī's works are of a mystical nature and since Hujwīrī mentions that al-Tirmidhī describes Abū Ḥanīfa as having been one who wore wool in his early days, we might assume that al-Tirmidhī is using the fact that Abū Ḥanīfa left wearing wool as a sign of his leaving asceticism. Al-Tirmidhī was a mystic who consistently attacks asceticism. Also, the context for Hujwīrī's discussion is a mystical treatise. Even if the *mashāyikh* mentioned here were not strictly mystics, the book would still be a first of its kind in the genre of biographical dictionaries.

Maḥjūb.[406] In al-Sulamī's introduction we find a statement whose only precedent is in the writings of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmdhī. Al-Sulamī writes, *wa-atbaʿa al-anbiyāʾ ʿalayhim al-salām bi-l-awliyāʾ yukhallifūnahum fī sunanihim wa-yaḥmilūna ummatahum ʿalā ṭarīqatihim wa-simatihim*, "He made the saints follow the prophets, upon whom be peace, and he made them (the saints) successors in their ways. They (the saints) guide the community upon their [straight] path and their [high] character."[407] In Chapter 1 we discussed how al-Tirmidhī made an important claim about religious authority when he said that the saints (*awliyāʾ*) were the successors (*khulafāʾ*) of the prophets (*anbiyāʾ*). The *awliyāʾ* in al-Sulamī's introduction are those who, *yataʾaddab bi-him al-murīdūn wa-yaʾtasī bi-him al-muwaḥḥidūn*, "…those with whom seekers of God have good manners and from whom the ordinary Muslims seek healing."[408] In the same introduction he specifically states that the *awliyāʾ* are the successors (*khulafāʾ*) of the prophets and messengers, *fa-hum fī al-umamī khulafāʾ al-anbiyāʾ ʿalayhim al-salām wa-l-rusul ṣalawāt Allāhi ʿalayhim*, "Among the various nations they are the successors of the prophets and the messenger may the blessings of Allāh be upon them."[409] Al-Sulamī goes on to use a specific term that we rarely see outside of al-Tirmidhī's mystical writings. He says, *wa-hum arbāb ḥaqāʾiq al-tawḥīd, wa-l-muḥaddathūn*, "They are the masters of the realities of unification and those spoken to by God."[410] None of the Ṣūfīs quoted in al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya* use the term *muḥaddath* (one spoken to by God). Only one use of the term is found in al-Sulamī's Qurʾān commentary *Ḥaqāʾiq al-Tafsīr* in a quote by Ibn ʿAṭāʾ (d. 309/922), one of the Ṣūfīs of Baghdād in the circle

[406] ʿAlī b. ʿUthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī. *The Kashf al-maḥjūb, the oldest Persian treatise on ṣufism by ʿAlī B. ʿUthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī*. Ed. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson. Leyden [u.a.]: Brill [u.a.]. 1911, p. 46. Al-Sulamī uses the term *shaykh* to describe the Ṣūfī master in the introduction to his *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*. Ibid. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, p. 5.
[407] Ibid. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, p. 4.
[408] Ibid, p. 4.
[409] Ibid, p. 5.
[410] Ibid, p. 5.

of al-Junayd. However, in this quote he does not specifically connect the *muḥaddath* to the saint (*walī*). On the other hand, throughout al-Tirmidhī's works the *awliyāʾ* are described as *muḥaddathūn*, just as al-Sulamī describes them in his introduction.[411] According to al-Sulamī these *awliyāʾ* are *aṣḥāb al-firāsāt al-ṣādiqa*, "those who possess true insight", that is, they have special knowledge from God.[412] They are an elect group that will be present in the Muslim community until the end of time. This is how al-Tirmidhī also describes them in *SA*, *kullamā māta minhum rajul*^{un} *khallafahu ākhir*^{un} *maqāmahu hattā … atā waqt zawāl al-dunyā*, "Whenever one of them dies another succeeds him until…the time for the end of the world arrives."[413] Al-Sulamī is explicit about the purpose of his *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*. He writes in his introduction, *fa-aḥbabtu an ajmaʿ fī siyar mutaʾakhkhirī al-awliyāʾ kitāb*^{an} *usammīhī ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, "I wanted to make into a book the biographies of the later saints, I call it the generations of the Ṣūfīs."[414] Al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt* can be seen as an extension of al-Tirmidhī's basic premise that the saints are the true inheritors and successors of the prophets and that they will be present in the Muslim community till the end of time. Another assumption in al-Sulamī's *Ṭabaqāt* is a theological one that al-Tirmidhī clearly makes, which is that the *awliyāʾ* can, in fact, be known. When al-Sulamī lists his generations of Ṣūfīs he is specifying particular individuals as saints. Even during al-Sulamī's time the general agreement among Ḥanafī/Māturīdī and Ashʿarī theologians was that a saint (*walī*) is hidden and that he cannot claim that he is a saint (*walī*).[415]

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[411] For al-Tirmidhī's description of the types of *muḥaddath* see *NU*, p. 118. For al-Tirmidhī's connecting the *awliyāʾ* with the *muḥaddathūn* see *NU*, p. 248. For the same connection also see *SA*. Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 86.
[412] Ibid. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, p. 5.
[413] Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 44.
[414] Ibid. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, p. 5.
[415] According to Abū Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114), one of the foremost Māturīdī theologians, the person who claims sainthood (*walāya*) loses that stature immediately and the saint (*walī*) who sees a miracle (*karāma*) proceed from himself must assume that it could be a means of God leading him astray and he must try to conceal the miracle. *Ibid. Tabṣira al-adilla*, pp. 536–538. Al-Bāqillānī (d. 403–405/1013) in his book on the miracles of prophets and the miracles of saints and their difference from other supernatural phenomena does not bring up the issue of whether a *walī* can openly claim to be a *walī* or that a *walī* can know he is a *walī*. Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī. *Kitāb*

Al-Tirmidhī addresses the question of hiddenness versus visibility of the saint (*walī*) in his *SA*, *fa man saʾala rabbahu al-imāma li-l-muttaqīn hal yakūnu ghāmiḍan,*[416] "But is that person hidden from view who asks his Lord to make him an *imām* for those who fear God?"[417] Al-Tirmidhī gives the example of the Caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. He argues that both of these Caliphs are considered saints (*awliyāʾ*) of God and they were clearly not hidden.[418] Al-Tirmidhī even claims that a saint (*walī*) can, in fact, know that he is saint (*walī*).[419] Al-Sulamī's introduction to his *Ṭabaqāt* brings several important ideas together. He appears to use al-Tirmidhī's idea that the saints are the real successors (*khulafāʾ*) to the prophets.[420] Then he connects the idea of sainthood with the term *ṣūfiyya*, giving this term wider connotations than merely being a reference to a particular mystical school. Finally, he brings under the title of the *ṣūfiyya* a whole range of different mystical movements ranging from the Baghdād Ṣūfīs to the Malāmatiyya to the Ḥakīms. Al-Sulamī then uses the literary genre of the biographical dictionary as a compelling tool to communicate this synthesis. The content of the biographical sketches that al-Sulamī employs are pithy statements that demonstrate the divinely inspired knowledge of these exemplars. This also follows al-Tirmidhī's position that sainthood (*walāya*) is primarily knowledge-based. A saint (*walī*) is a saint (*walī*) primarily because he is given special knowledge by God. This understanding of sainthood (*walāya*) differs from previous concepts of

al-bayān ʿan al-farq bayna al-muʿjizāt wa-l-karāmāt wa-l-ḥiyal wa-l-kahāna wa-l-ṣiḥr wa-l-nāranjāt. Ed. Richard Joseph McCarthy. Bayrūt: al-Maktaba al-Sharqiyya. 1958. Al-Qushayrī mentions in his *Risāla* that Abū Bakr b. Furāk (d. 406/1015), an Ashʿarī theologian in Nīshāpūr was of the opinion that a *walī* cannot know or claim that he is a *walī*. Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 270.

[416] Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 60.

[417] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 129.

[418] Ibid, p. 128.

[419] Ibid, p. 41.

[420] Both al-Tirmidhī and al-Sulamī call the *awliyāʾ* the *khulafāʾ* of the *anbiyāʾ* (prophets), and of the the Prophet Muḥammad in particular by al-Tirmidhī. If they had called the awliya *khulafāʾ* Allāh they would have indicated a more general *khilāfa* (vicegerancy) of the human race as God's vicegearants on earth.

walāya that saw the saints (*awliyāʾ*) as distinguished primarily by their ability to perform miracles (*karāmāt*).[421]

Al-Qushayrī is the first Ṣūfī writer to include a chapter on *walāya* in his epistle on *taṣawwuf* (Sufism). Al-Qushayrī builds upon al-Sulamī's basic framework, incorporating a more concise version of al-Sulamīs *Ṭabaqāt* at the beginning of his handbook on Sufism. Al-Sulamī clearly set a pattern that was then adopted by later Ṣūfīs such as ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī in his own *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) in his *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ*, Farīd al-Dīn al-ʿAṭṭār (d. 627/1230) in his *Tadhkirat al-Awliyāʾ* and al-Jāmī (d. 898/1492) in his *Nafaḥāt al-Uns*. Like al-Tirmidhī and al-Sulamī, al-Qushayrī accedes to the possibility that a saint (*walī*) can know he is a saint (*walī*) without this detracting from his reverence for God.[422] Yet, what distinguishes al-Qushayrī's contribution most is that he formalized the relationship between master (*shaykh*) and disciple (*murīd*). We can see this formalization as a logical progression of the concept of the successorship (*khilāfa*) of the Prophet initiated by al-Tirmidhī and normalized by al-Sulamī. In al-Qushayrī's advice (*waṣiyya*) to aspirants to the path (*murīdūn*) he writes:

> *Wa-lam yakun ʿaṣrᵘⁿ min al-aʿṣār fī muddat al-islām illā wa-fīhi shaykhᵘⁿ min shuyūkh hādhihi al-ṭāʾifa mimman lahu ʿulūm al-tawḥīd wa-imāmat al-qawm illā wa-aʾimmatu dhālika al-waqt min al-ʿulamāʾ istaslamū lidhālika al-shaykh wa-tawāḍaʿū lahu wa-tabarrakū bihi wa-lawlā maziyyatᵘⁿ wa-khuṣūṣiyyatun lahum wa-illā kāna al-amru bi-l-ʿaks.*[423]
>
> There has never been an age in the history of Islam without a master of this community who was proficient in the science of the oneness [of God]. There has never been a leader of the Ṣūfīs to whom the greatest scholars of his epoch would not subordinate themselves and pay obeisance and seek blessings of. Had

[421] The primary discussion of *walāya* in books of creed and theological treatises up to al-Tirmidhī, was concerned with distinguishing between the miracles (*karāmāt*) of saints and the miracles (*muʿjizāt*) of prophets.
[422] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 270.
[423] Al-Qushayrī, ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Hawāzin. *Al-Risāla al-Qushayriyya*. Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Lebanon. 2001, p. 425.

> distinction and special qualities not belonged to them, this would not have been so.[424]

We can see from this quote that the term '*ṣūfiyya*' here cannot be a reference to the particular school of mysticism that originated in Baghdād around the circle of al-Junayd, but rather is used as a synonym for *awliyāʾ* (saints). The conflation of '*ṣūfiyya*' with '*awliyāʾ*' is an idea that al-Qushayrī appears to have taken from al-Sulamī. According to al-Qushayrī, the '*ṣūfiyya*' had been present in the Muslim community since its inception. They came from the scholarly class of *ʿulamāʾ*. *Taṣawwuf* was considered a 'science' (*ʿilm*) from among the sciences (*ʿulūm*) of Islamic learning and for al-Qushayrī, it represented the highest science.

Both al-Qushayrī and al-Sulamī use the same freedom/bondage dichotomy to talk about the Ṣūfiyya/*awliyāʾ* that we have found in al-Tirmidhī's terminology in Chapter 1. Al-Sulamī calls the Malāmatiyya *aḥrār* (the free ones) and they are equivalent to the highest degree of *awliyāʾ* in his mystical hierarchy.[425] Al-Qushayrī devotes a section in his *Risāla* to the *aḥrār* (the free ones), indicating that freedom (*hurriyya*) is a quality of the highest of the *awliyāʾ*.[426] This structure is consistent with al-Tirmidhī framework, in which we see that slavehood (*riqq*) applies to all Muslims except the slave (*mukātab*) who has paid off the last *dināر* that he owes to his master.[427] Those who have attained their freedom from their master, i.e., God, become the true rulers of the world and the temporal rulers (*salāṭīn*) have no power over them. Al-Qushayrī writes, *al-ḥurriyya an lā yakūn al-ʿabd taḥt riqq al-makhlūqāt wa lā yajrī ʿalayhi sulṭān al-mukawwanāt*,[428] "Freedom means that the servant of God does not allow himself to become enslaved by [other] creatures, nor is he subject to the power (*sulṭān*) of originated things

[424] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 404.
[425] Ibid. *Al-Malāmatiyya*, p. 115.
[426] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 229.
[427] Ibid, p. 231.
[428] Ibid. *Al-Risāla al-Qushayriyya*, p. 253.

(*mukawwanāt*)."[429] While it was al-Tirmidhī who first used the structure of *walāʾ* (clientage) to describe the *awliyāʾ*, he did not include the concept of lineage (*sanad*) that was also a central aspect to Arab claims of superiority over non-Arab Persians. With al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī, not only do we find the motif of clientage but we also find the ideal of lineage (*sanad*) as a further buttress to the claims of authority by the Ṣūfīs who, in their eyes, represented the saints (*awliyāʾ*).

Al-Qushayrī extends this paradigm first inaugurated by al-Tirmidhī and later developed by al-Sulamī.[430] His *Risāla* functions to generate a transformation of authority in which the *awliyāʾ* are the true rulers of the world. This authority then transfers to a new social milieu in which the *shaykh* and his disciples (*murīdūn*) represent a microcosm of the Islamic community ruled by the *awliyāʾ*. The *shaykh* is the *walī* and his disciples are the *mukātabūn* (freed slaves who owe allegiance to their free master). With al-Qushayrī, the Ṣūfī *shaykh* is to be treated as the successor to the Prophet (*khalīfa*) and one of the free ones (*aḥrār*) who are among the highest of the *awliyāʾ*. A central aspect of this microcosm is the pact (*bayʿa*) between the disciple (*murīd*) and his master (*shaykh*).[431] This pact (*bayʿa*) resembles the pact that Muslims traditionally made with the Caliph of the Prophet establishing his authority over them. The pact between master (*shaykh*) and disciple (*murīd*) demands complete obedience to the will of the master (*shaykh*). To contravene this pact is akin to apostasy (*ridda*) in a virtual sense.[432] Al-Qushayrī defends the Ṣūfī

[429] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 230.
[430] Al-Sulamī wrote a treatise on the manners (*adab*) of a disciple (*murīd*) with his master (*shaykh*) and he links this *adab* with the *adab* an ordinary Muslim should have with the saints (*awliyāʾ*). Chiabotti claims that al-Sulamī introduces the idea that the disciple (*murīd*) should not question his master and al-Qushayrī builds upon this thesis. *Ibid. Entre soufisme et savoir islamique*, pp. 621–622.
[431] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 407. Also see a discussion of the importance of the pact (*bayʿa*) in al-Qushayrī's vision of Sufism in Chiabotti's dissertation. Chiabotti also claims that respect for the *shaykh* is at the center of al-Qushayrī's narrative. Ibid. *Entre soufisme et savoir islamique*, p. 622.
[432] Ibid. *Risāla*, p. 415.

practice of *samāʿ* (audition) and the use of musical instruments.[433] The Ṣūfī gathering (*majlis*) in al-Qushayrī's *Risāla* is akin to a caliphal court with the Caliph presiding over the entertainment of his guests. This differed markedly from the gathering (*majlis*) of the Baghdād Ṣūfīs, which resembled the salon more than a kingly court. The virtual power of the *awliyāʾ* that al-Tirmidhī assigns to an ambiguous and amorphous group of elite (*khawāṣṣ*) exemplars is narrowed by al-Sulamī to a select group of representative individuals in his *Ṭabaqāt* and then narrowed further by al-Qushayrī to idealize the position of the spiritual master (*shaykh*). The basic structure in this progression from al-Tirmidhī to al-Sulamī to al-Qushayrī remains the same, in which the master/slave and Caliph/subject dichotomy is transferred to a new social space that mediates and negotiates ties of allegiance between master (*shaykh*) and disciple (*murīd*). Francesco Chiabotti claims that al-Qushayrī is speaking to masters (*shuyūkh*) just as much as he is speaking to disciples (*murīdūn*) and some of his texts can be construed as a template by which these masters can consecrate their authority. Since knowledge and application of the sacred law (Sharīʿa) was the first rung in this spiritual hierarchy for all of these figures, it meant that the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*, wherever they were in the Muslim world, could potentially aspire to this new status of Ṣūfī and saint (*walī*). This can go far in explaining why Sufism spread so far and so quickly from a limited geographical space to the far reaches of the Muslim world in only a couple of hundred years. It is significant to note that Sufism did not spread to the entire Muslim world from Baghdād, but from Nīshāpūr, because it was in Nīshāpūr that Sufism reached its maturity. Al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī used al-Tirmidhī's basic framework to present the *ʿulamāʾ* as the new Caliphs of the *umma* through the new institution of Sufism. Muslim scholars from around the Muslim world adopted this new framework almost en masse.

[433] Ibid, pp. 342–357.

Conclusion

Al-Tirmidhī was not a Ṣūfī in the restricted sense of the word since he was not acquainted with the Baghdād Ṣūfīs of whom al-Junayd was their leader. However, if we look at Sufism in the broader sense and as a product of the great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century in Nīshāpūr, we can quite easily consider him to be one of the leading theorists of that synthesis. When we look at al-Tirmidhī's contemporaries and Muslim mystics prior to al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī we find that sainthood (*walāya*) was a concept that was used, but did not occupy the place of central importance that it played in al-Tirmidhī's writings or in the writings of al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī. When al-Tirmidhī connected sainthood (*walāya*) to religious authority he created an alternative paradigm of authority that rivaled not only the Shīʿī imams and the temporal Abbasid Caliph and his sultans, but also the Sunnī scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*) of his time. However, since the *awliyāʾ* ultimately came from the ranks of the *ʿulamāʾ*, his concept of *walāya* had the effect of sanctifying the entire class of Sunnī scholars. The Ṣūfīs of Baghdād tended to be more collegial in their relationships with one another. Their gatherings were more akin to salons in which a small group of elite mystics would gather to discourse on mystical topics. It is al-Sulamī who combines the prestige of Baghdād Sufism with the authority structures of eastern mysticism, particularly the Malāmatīs. Al-Tirmidhī's concept of *walāya* was instrumental in allowing a new form of mysticism to emerge, a form of mysticism that we call Sufism today. This was the great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century in Khurāsān. The elite and inward looking phenomenon of Baghdād Sufism came to represent the outward face of a mystical system that was wholly Khurāsānian. Al-Qushayrī took the basic template provided by al-Sulamī and formalized it in his master/student paradigm. If al-Hujwīrī of Ghazna was correct in stating

that *walāya* is the basis upon which Sufism is built, it is clear that this basis was a Khurāsānian basis.

Chapter 5

Al-Tirmidhī's Gnoseology of Sainthood

This chapter focuses on how various aspects of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood address problematic elements within Islamic social and religious spheres. After providing some historical and theoretical context we will discuss the light-basis of al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and how it sets the basis for a more egalitarian approach to sainthood. The social consequences of an unrestricted access to sainthood must have been apparent to al-Tirmidhī who then restricts sainthood by providing the requirement of outward religious knowledge. Another very important aspect of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine is the sealer of saints. After addressing some ambiguities concerning this concept, I will show how the sealer of saints has important implications for creating a more optimistic outlook toward the trajectory of human destiny. This is an optimism preserved in Sufism as a counterweight to more Traditionalist views. Finally, we will discuss how al-Tirmidhī's doctrine works to create a 'third space' that fragments religious authority in Islam to create a religious 'civic space'.

Thus far we have shown how al-Tirmidhī's concept of sainthood did not appear out of a vacuum, nor was it on the fringe of the Islamic mystical tradition. Important social and political factors were at play in motivating al-Tirmidhī to propose a new approach to Islamic sainthood. The category of sainthood had already existed in al-Tirmidhī's Ḥanafī theological milieu and al-Tirmidhī readily appropriated Hellenistic mystical/philosophical speculation to create a theoretical frame for his focus on sainthood (*walāya*), which was inspired by Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature. The complex synthesis of these disparate elements is what immediately comes to the fore. Al-Tirmidhī's milieu in Transoxania was clearly one of vibrant intellectual exchange.

While we have looked at the various discourses that informed al-Tirmidhī's thought, we have not yet looked deeply into the internal structure of his thought. This will be important in tracing al-Tirmidhī's legacy as he was internalized and interpreted by the later Islamic mystical tradition. We will be focusing on the legacy of al-Tirmidhī's thought in Chapter 6 by addressing the deep debt Ibn ʿArabī owes to al-Tirmidhī as well as the *ḥikma* tradition adopted by the masters of the Shādhilī Ṣūfī Ṭarīqa that has survived through today.

Sainthood in the *Homilies* of Isaac of Nineveh

In Chapter 2 we discussed the use of wisdom (*ḥikma*) in the work of Isaac of Nineveh. As we stated earlier, Isaac of Nineveh provides a useful point of reference for our study of early Islamic mysticism. Even more so than wisdom, the saints play a major role in Isaac's teaching. We have talked about how the use of the term saint (*walī*) indicates a particular set of associations and meanings as a result of its derivation from the Arabic root *w-l-y*. Isaac wrote in Syriac and the word he used for 'saint' ܩܕܝܫ (*qadīsh*) is derived from the Semitic root *q-d-s*. This word in Syriac does not leverage the connotations of protection and power that we find with the root *w-l-y* in Arabic. The word ܩܕܝܫ (*qadīsh*) means "holy one" and connotes that which is sacred and pure, also indicating virginity and celibacy.[434] This is consistent with the way Isaac used this term in his Homilies. For Isaac, the saint is idealized as the celibate monk who becomes pure through his ascetic piety.[435] The saint is someone who suffers in this life but overcomes his suffering through contemplation and prayer.[436] He is someone close to God who wanders in the wilderness and the desert by treading the path of asceticism to make the way easier for those who

[434] Payne Smith, R., and Jessie Payne Smith Margoliouth. *A compendious Syriac dictionary, founded upon the thesaurus syriacus of R. Payne Smith*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1957, pp. 489–490.
[435] Ibid. *Mystic Treatises*, p. 369.
[436] Ibid, pp. 279, 284.

come after.[437] Saints, according to Isaac, gaze upon God without a veil and have miracles.[438] People in positions of authority seek them out for their blessing.[439] For Isaac, the saint is holy and reaches his sainthood through his ascetic practice and not primarily through knowledge. The saint is juxtaposed with the theologian and the judge.[440] Isaac of Nineveh's description of the saints closely follows Peter Brown's formulation of the saint as a 'friend of God' and as an intercessor.[441] However, the saint of late antique Christianity is primarily a saint who is immortalized in death and whose body and grave become loci where heaven and earth meet.[442] The veneration of the saints shifted the center of devotion from the pagan temple at the center of the late-antique city to the cemeteries that lay on the edge of the city where great mausoleums and monuments marked the redefined landscape.[443] The Desert Fathers inspired a new vision of sainthood tied closely to asceticism and this ideal gave rise to important monastic institutions that sought to capture this vision. The ideal Christian saint in the Near East just before the rise of Islam was someone who lived the life of an ascetic and hermit, but in death was celebrated as a powerful connection between Heaven and Earth.

Sainthood in the 9th-Century C.E.

Goldziher was the first orientalist to provide a critical evaluation of sainthood in Islam. His essay, "Veneration of Saints in Islam," attempts to show how the 'pure' theology of Islam was forced to negotiate and therefore accede space to the cult of saints that was socially and

[437] Ibid, pp. 220, 281, 372.
[438] Ibid, pp. 282, 286.
[439] Ibid, p. 206.
[440] Ibid, p. 206.
[441] Peter Brown. *The cult of the saints: its rise and function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1981, p. 6.
[442] Ibid, pp. 4–7.
[443] Ibid, p. 8.

culturally embedded in the regions that the Arabs had conquered. Goldziher sees the early Qurʾānic message as portraying a God that is so different and distant from humanity that Muslims needed mediators to bridge the "insurmountable barrier that divides an infinite and unapproachable Godhead from weak and finite humanity." For Goldziher, grave visitation, relics, the healing powers of places visited by a saint and saintly miracles are all examples of pre-Islamic cultural practices that Muslim theologians found impossible to reject. What we have demonstrated thus far, however, is that early Islamic sainthood (*walāya*) was almost exclusively concerned with living saints and not dead saints. The cult of Muslim saints is a later development and is not directly associated with the writings of the early Ṣūfīs.[444] As we showed in Chapter 1, some early Islamic notions of *walāya* reflect the structure of social institutions that grew out of the Arab/Islamic conquests and the negotiation of power and authority between Arabs and non-Arabs. Goldziher's observations are important but do not relate directly to this study, which is concerned primarily with the theoretical and cosmological aspects of sainthood, that is, *walāya* as a concept and doctrine.

Yet, still important to our discussion of *walāya* is the level to which the *walī Allāh* is indebted to the 'holy man' of Late Antiquity. This will give us a point of departure to then discuss the different types of saint (*walī*) in 9th-century C.E. Iraq and Khurāsān. Despite the many continuities between Islam and its Christian and Jewish context in Late Antiquity, those who study prophetology in Islam and Judaism view Islam as a movement that was to some extent *sui generis* with respect to Jewish prophetic antecedents.[445] Islam set the stage for a new

[444] Christopher Taylor identifies the first reference to a Muslim grave visitation (*ziyāra*) guide as referencing the visitation guide of al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-Faḍḍal al-Taymī al-Kūfī who died in 838/839 C.E. However, the first guides that we possess more than a passing reference to, date to somewhere around the end of the 10th-century C.E. Christopher Schurman Taylor. *In the vicinity of the righteous: ziyāra and the veneration of Muslim saints in late medieval Egypt*. Leiden: Brill. 1998, p. 5.

[445] Chase Robinson. "Prophecy and Holy Men in Early Islam," in *The cult of saints in late antiquity and the Middle Ages: essays on the contribution of Peter Brown*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1999, p. 242.

paradigm of activist piety in which the holy man was not only the one who healed the sick, exorcized demons and made barren women fertile, but one who came with an army to conquer cities.[446] The source material for this early period aside from the Qurʾānic text does not provide more than a glimpse into the dynamic of prophecy and, by extension, sainthood. According to Jaakko Hämeen-Antila there were two types of prophecy in early 7th-century C.E. Arabia. There were Arabian prophets modeled after their Biblical counterparts and *kuhhān* or soothsayers who played an intermediary role between human beings and the divine through fortune-telling, clairvoyance and haruspicy. The continuum between prophet and *kāhin* seems to have been fluid in the pre-Islamic period in Arabia.[447] Nevertheless, by the 9th-century C.E., both prophecy and soothsaying were no longer viable options within mainstream Muslim society. The idea of continuous prophetic revelation after the death of the Prophet was no longer accepted by either Sunnīs or Twelver Shīʿīs by the end of the 9th-century C.E.[448] If Islam represents a break with the past with respect to prophetic types and if a distinctly Arabian prophecy was no longer operative by the 9th-century C.E., we can assume that Muslim sainthood was the product of transformations that occurred within Islam as well as through negotiated interactions with other religious traditions living under Muslim rule.

Early concepts of *walāya* were wedded to political meanings.[449] It was the Shīʿīs who first developed this term and made it the cornerstone of their doctrine of the Imamate. Early Shīʿī

[446] Ibid, p. 243.
[447] Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila Nissinen. "Arabian Prophecy," in *Prophecy in its ancient Near Eastern context: Mesopotamian, biblical, and Arabian perspectives*. Martti Nissinen, editor. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. 2000.
[448] Among proto-Sunnī theologians the Prophet Muhammad was seen as the last prophet and among Imāmī Twelver Shīʿīs the minor occultation had taken place later to be replaced by the greater occultation sealing prophecy until the return of the awaited Mahdī. The idea of continual prophecy did not completely die out though, but continued with the Ismāʿīlī Shīʿīs and other groups such as the Aḥmadiyya. For more on the Aḥmadiyya and the continuation of prophecy in Islam see *Prophecy Continuous* by Yohanan Friedmann.
[449] Abū ʿAlā ʿAfīfī. *Al-Taṣawwuf, al-thawra al-rūhīyya fī al-Islām*. Al-Iskandarīyah: Dār al-Maʿārif. 1963, p. 291.

ascetics[450] were some of the first to discuss the relative importance of saints (*awliyāʾ*) and prophets (*anbiyāʾ*), giving preference to the *awliyāʾ* over the *anbiyāʾ*.[451] Following them in this were two ascetics from Syria, Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (d. 215/830) and Aḥmad b. Abī al-Ḥawārī (d. 230/845 or 246/860), who also both considered the *awliyāʾ* to rank above the *anbiyāʾ*. The Muʿtazilīs of this same period formed an opposing position denying the existence of *walāya* altogether.[452] The political nature of the divide is clearly apparent with those disenfranchised groups such as the Shīʿīs and early ascetics developing a competing regime of authority in opposition to the dominant power structure. Muʿtazilī theology was the first orthodoxy in Islam to extend beyond a single locale and came to be associated with an entrenched religious aristocratic class.[453] While Shīʿīs were opposing the political structure of the Caliphate, early ascetics opposed the 'corruption' of true religious practice among Traditionists.[454] It is apparent that the concept of *walāya* in both of these early groups became a doctrine that voiced opposition to a reification of authority both politically and religiously.

The veneration of holy individuals was common amongst several other major movements during this period. Traditionists, for example, were known for demonstrations of their dedication to the Prophet through relics, as when Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal is said to have requested that he be buried with three hairs of the Prophet, one upon each eye and one on his mouth. Demonstrations

[450] For example, Kulayb and Riyā from Kūfa were among the early Shīʿī ascetics.
[451] Ibid, p. 304.
[452] Ibid, p. 305.
[453] The Miḥna was a process by which the Abbasid state sought to create uniformity in its judicial system. The *miḥna* (the test scholars were given before allowing them to become judges or provide testimony in court) was a method for examining scholars who sought appointments to judgeships. By making Muʿtazilī doctrine a key to acquiring a position in the judicial system, the Abbasid Caliphate was creating an entrenched group of religious notables (*aʿyān*) which was only supplanted with the arrival of the Seljuqs in the 11th century. Ibid. "Miḥna," *EI2*.
[454] Fudayl b. ʿIyāḍ (d. 188/803) represents a trend of would-be *ḥadīth* scholars who became disillusioned with the profession of Ḥadīth science and withdraw from the ranks of the professional men of religion. Here we can see the early development of an identity that contrasts to the identity of the *ʿulamāʾ* as an identity that is nonconformist and anti-establishment. Ibid. *Islamic mysticism a short history*, p. 24.

of devotion at his grave were described as so ardent that the cemetery had to be protected by civil authorities. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's grave was one of the most visited gravesites in Baghdād after his death.[455] A similar type of devotion is recorded among certain Khārijīs who would not go to war against the Umayyad troops until they had cut their hair at the tomb of Ṣāliḥ b. Musarriḥ (d. 78/697) who was a Khārijī who had rebelled in Northern Mesopotamia around 695 C.E.[456] These examples of veneration at the tombs of holy men are but one facet of the social and cultural practices that were later integrated into Islamic forms of saint veneration. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā (d. 281/894), a Traditionist and *zāhid* (renunciant), provides us with a useful point of reference on the topic of sainthood (*walāya*) at the end of the 3rd/9th-century. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was a contemporary of al-Junayd and al-Tirmidhī and was a tutor to several Abbasid Caliphs.[457] His book *al-Awliyāʾ* or *The Saints* is a collection of Ḥadīth, quotes from important ascetics/mystics and stories about the saints (*awliyāʾ*). In Ibn Abī al-Dunyā's book the ideal saint (*walī*) is the ascetic worshiper (*zāhid ʿābid*). They are worshippers (*ʿubbād*) who are clothed in awe (*khushūʿ*), lowliness (*dhull*), fear (*khawf*) and God-consciousness (*taqwā*).[458] Ibn Abī al-Dunyā's work seems to consciously disassociate the *awliyāʾ* from having any worldly or temporal power. In a quote ascribed anonymously to a "man from Banī Hāshim" he writes:

> *Lā yanbaghī li-awliyāʾ Allāh min ahli dār al-khulūd al-ladhīna lahā saʿyuhum wa-fīhā raghbatuhum an yakūna awliyāʾ al-sulṭān min ahli dār al-ghurūr al-ladhīna lahā saʿyuhum wa-fīhā raghbatuhum hum ashaddu tabāruz^{an} wa ashaddu taʿāṭuf^{an} li-*

[455] Henri Laoust. "Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 30 January 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ah-mad-b-h-anbal-COM_0027>

[456] Ibid. "Prophecy and holy men," p. 255.

[457] A. Dietrich. "Ibn Abī al-Dunyā." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 03 February 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ibn-abi-l-dunya-SIM_3046>

[458] ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad Ibn Abī al-Dunyā. *Al-Awliyāʾ*. Ed. Abū Hājir Muḥammad al-Saʿīd b. Basyūnī Zaghlūl. Bayrūt: Muʾassasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfīyya. 1993, p. 48.

> *ansābihim wa-akhlāqihim wa-umūrihim min awliyāʾ Allāh fī rabbihim wa-fī dīnihim.*[459]
>
> The saints (*awliyāʾ*) of Allāh from the people of the Everlasting Abode, whose striving is for that and whose desire is wholly for that, should not let the supporters (*awliyāʾ*) of the Caliph from the people of the Deceitful Abode, whose striving is for that and whose desire is for that, be more competitive and more covetous for their ancestry and their manners and their affairs than the saints (*awliyāʾ*) of God are for their Lord and their religion.

This quote clearly restricts the saints to an otherworldly status and juxtaposes them to the supporters (*awliyāʾ*) of the Caliph who are engaged in worldly endeavors. In other words, there are only two options for the *awliyāʾ*, either to be God's saints, in which case they should be otherworldly, or to be outward supporters (*awliyāʾ*) of the Caliph. We can contrast this to al-Tirmidhī's strident claims that the *awliyāʾ* were, in fact, the true Caliphs themselves and that the Abbasids had lost any right they may have had to the title. It is clear that by the end of the 3rd/9th-century the *awliyāʾ* were a topic of discussion and it was not only the Ṣūfīs who were talking about the *awliyāʾ*. Ascetics and people of the court like Ibn Abī al-Dunyā were intent on defining who the *awliyāʾ* were. The fact that the Ṭāhirids and Samānids were relatively autonomous from the control and supervision of Baghdād may have given al-Tirmidhī the space to write freely on this topic without fear of retribution from the Abbasid authorities. Al-Tirmidhī's major contribution to the concept of *walāya* was to combine the *awliyāʾ* and all of this word's associations with power and authority to a gnoseology that imbued these saints (*awliyāʾ*) with knowledge directly from God. We know from Foucault that power and knowledge are inextricably linked, and when al-Tirmidhī weds these two concepts, he unleashes new possibilities to envision and recreate Islamic authority. We will now look at the structure of al-

[459] Ibid, p. 20.

Tirmidhī's concept of *walāya* and what its implications are for the trajectory of Islamic thought and religious culture.

The Light-basis of al-Tirmidhī's Doctrine of *Walāya*

As we have seen up to this point in the work of Isaac of Nineveh, as well as saintly and holy figures in various early Islamic communities from the Traditionists (Ahl al-Ḥadīth) to the Khārijīs, it is clear that sainthood was an element of a shared *koine* (or we can say 'floating motif') in the Near East during the first three centuries of Islam. The topic of saints was discussed in early Ḥanafī theological texts primarily to differentiate between prophets and saints with respect to miracles and their relative superiority. The episteme that characterizes this period is one that includes not only the knowledge categories of theology (Kalām) and tradition (Ḥadīth), but beginning in the 8th-century C.E. we also find the knowledge category of light (*nūr*) come into formal use among Muslim intellectuals. The idea of knowledge as light was developed by the early Shīʿīs in their formulation of the doctrine of the Imamate but became widespread among both Sunnī and Shīʿī circles in the 9th- and 10th-centuries C.E. and was developed in detail by al-Tirmidhī.[460] Knowledge as Kalām was formalized by the Muʿtazilī theologians. This knowledge type was rejected by al-Tirmidhī as we mentioned earlier in Chapter 2. The idea of belief (*īmān*) construed as light (*nūr*) was something already developed within Ḥanafī theological circles before al-Tirmidhī. Al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī in his *al-Sawād al-Aʿẓam* describes belief (*īmān*) as light (*nūr*) contrasting it to disbelief (*kufr*), which he calls darkness (*ẓulm*).[461] According to al-Samarqandī and general Ḥanafī creed, belief (*īmān*) is also a

[460] Ibid. *Knowledge triumphant*, p. 151. Early 'proto-Sunnī' scholars like Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795) are also quoted as considering knowledge to be light. We can view the 'knowledge as light' motif as a possible reaction to the 'knowledge as tradition' motif of the Ḥadīth scholars.
[461] Ibid. *al-Sawād al-aʿẓam*, fol. 77.

knowledge (*maʿrifa*) in the heart and affirmation (*iqrār*) by the tongue.[462] In al-Samarqandī's definition the Ḥanafī creed, belief is explained as the combination of four created 'actions' (*afʿāl*) from the believer and four uncreated 'attributes' (*ṣifāt*) from God. When these eight elements combine in the heart, the result is true belief.[463] Belief is seen as a confluence of uncreated attributes (*ṣifāt*) from God and created actions (*afʿāl*) from the believer (*muʾmin*) that meet but never exactly touch in a motif reminiscent of the Qurʾānic analogy of the meeting of the two seas between which there is an interstice (*barzakh*).[464] We can compare this to al-Tirmidhī's approach to belief as a knowledge and created light that mingles and meets God's attribute of light as it appears in the heart of the believer (*muʾmin*).[465] This formulation for the mechanism of belief in the Ḥanafī theological tradition made it very easy for al-Tirmidhī to introduce an alternative definition of 'light-knowledge' and to make it central to his discussion on sainthood (*walāya*). For al-Tirmidhī, the saint (*walī*) is the mature believer (*al-muʾmin al-bāligh*).[466] The saint (*walī*) knows God and has certainty (*yaqīn*) of him through the shining of God's light in the saint's heart. This light is able to shine upon the *nafs* (lower self) where it is tamed and settles in

[462] Ibid, fol. 22.
[463] Ibid, fol. 20. The four uncreated 'attributes' (*ṣifāt*) from God are guidance (*hidāya*), giving the guidance (*iʿṭāʾ*), holding firm (*al-tamassuk*) to the guidance, and acceptance (*qabūl*) of the guidance. The four elements from the believer are seeing (*ruʾyā*) the guidance, accepting (*qabūl*) the gift of guidance, ignoring or forgetting the hold upon guidance (*jahl al-tamassukʿalā al-hudā*), and beseeching God (*al-taḍarruʿ*) to accept the guidance.
[464] The Qurʾānic verses indicating this motif are found in Chapter 55 (al-Raḥmān), verses 19–20: *maraj al-baḥrayni yaltaqiyān baynahumā barzakhun lā yabghiyān*, He released the two seas meeting; between which is an interstice that is not crossed.
[465] Al-Tirmidhī describes this effect using the function of sight and its ability to distinguish color. He describes sight as a merging or confluence of light (*ḍawʾ*) from outside (*khārij*) the human being as meeting the light (*nūr*) of vision within the eye, however these two lights meet but do not mix (*lā yajtamiʿān*). Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 240. Al-Tirmidhī also writes that aid (*ʿawn*) from Allāh is a light (*nūr*) that is cast up on the heart and gives light to belief (*īmān*). Ibid, vol. 5, p. 174. Also, al-Tirmidhī describes *tawḥīd* as belief, which is *nūr Allāh fī qalbihi*, the light of God in his heart. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 119. Al-Tirmidhī talks about two levels of light in the heart. He says that when God chooses belief for a person God puts a light (*nūr*) in his heart and through this light guides the servant to God's light. The true light of God (*al-nūr al-aʿẓam*) is the light of the inward (*bāṭin*) and the light of the outward (*ẓāhir*) is the light of protection (*wiqāya*) that covers this light. When someone sins a major sin then the protective outward light leaves the inward light unprotected, but this outward light returns when one returns to obedience. Ibid, vol. 4, pp. 90–91.
[466] Ibid, vol. 4, p. 159.

the 'earth' of the bowels; then the spirit (*rūh*) ascends to the "heavens" of the brain. When the *nafs* (lower self) and the *rūḥ* (spirit) return to their origins, God's light is able to shine forth in an unaltered and unobscured fashion[467] and when this happens the believer is perfected and becomes a *walī*. According to al-Tirmidhī, this can only happen by God's grace, although God's grace usually reaches only those who strive vigorously to master their lower selves. The important point here, however, is that this light (*nūr*) cannot be quantified or objectively measured against an external criterion. If true knowledge/belief is, in fact, light (*nūr*) then theoretically anybody could claim to possess sainthood (*walāya*). The social consequences of such a proposition must have been obvious to al-Tirmidhī who, as we mentioned in Chapter 1, was a landed patrician. Al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology had to be limited in some way to protect against its anarchic possibilities.

Restricting Sainthood

Al-Tirmidhī was not a revolutionary and he built into his concept of sainthood (*walāya*) several mechanisms to balance the claims he was making about the light-knowledge of the saints (*awliyāʾ*). One mechanism al-Tirmidhī used to limit the chaotic potential of light-knowledge was to set a standard by which this knowledge could be gauged. Al-Tirmidhī accomplishes this to some degree in his *SA* by posing a series of questions that a would-be saint should answer were he to claim sainthood (*walāya*). These questions were meant to be extremely challenging and even their number, one hundred and fifty, was daunting. There are questions such as, "What are the decrees of divine predestination?" and "What has every messenger received as his allotment from his Lord?"[468] These questions come under the rubric of what al-Tirmidhī calls *ḥikmat al-*

[467] It is not obscured by the smoke generated from the fire of the desires of the lower self (*nafs*).
[468] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 72–86.

ḥikma or *al-ḥikmat al-ʿulyā* (the wisdom of wisdom, or the highest wisdom). This type of wisdom includes knowledge of the letters (*ḥurūf*), of the primordial covenant (*mīthāq*), of God's divine gifts (*ālāʾ*) and of God's preordainments (*maqādīr*).[469] The second constraint al-Tirmidhī places on access to sainthood (*walāya*) is to restrict them to the scholarly class. It would seem counter-intuitive that al-Tirmidhī would make such a restriction given his fierce criticism of the scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) of his time. However, we have to remember that al-Tirmidhī himself came from this class of religious scholars and saw himself as a reformer of that class. He was not trying to replace the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*), but was seeking to reform it. In al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb Bayān al-ʿIlm* he expounds upon his tripartite division of scholars who are the *ʿulamāʾ*, *ḥukamāʾ* and *kubarāʾ*. As mentioned previously the term *kubarāʾ* is another term al-Tirmidhī uses for *awliyāʾ*.[470] For al-Tirmidhī, however, these are not separate categories, but are nested one within the other. The largest category is *al-ʿulamāʾ bi-aḥkām Allāh* (the scholars of God's rulings) and these are the scholars of outward (*ẓāhir*) knowledge. Within this category there is a smaller group of scholars of outward knowledge that al-Tirmidhī calls the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages). These he terms *al-ʿulamāʾ bi-amr Allāh* (the scholars of God's command) and they are knowledgeable about God's orchestration of affairs in the world or his *tadbīr* (planning) of affairs. Note that these are also called *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars). The final group, which is a smaller group among the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) are the *kubarāʾ* (great ones) and these are called *al-ʿulamāʾ bi-Allāh* (the scholars through/by God) and this group contains the knowledge of the previous two groups but are also purified inwardly and are God's true saints. Al-Tirmidhī writes in *Kitāb Bayān al-ʿIlm*:

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[469] Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 48.

[470] Al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī. *Kitāb bayān al-ʿilm*. in the Ankara Ms. Ismail Saib, I, 1571, fol. 20b. Al-Tirmidhī writes, *fa-ulāʾika (al-kubarāʾ) khulafāʾ Allāh ʿalā ʿibādihi wa-awliyāʾihi fī arḍihi*, And those (the *kubarāʾ*) are the Caliphs of God over his servants and his saints in his earth.

> *...al-kubarāʾ hum al-ladhīna jamaʿū hādhihi al-ʿulūm kullahā fa-ʿalimū al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām wa-fahimū tadbīrahu ʿanhu fī taḥlīlihi al-ḥalāl wa-taḥrīmihi al-ḥarām wa-iṭṭalaʿū fī ʿilm al-malakūt wa-istashʿarat qulūbuhum min ʿaẓamat Allāh fa-hābūhu wa-ajallūhu wa-lahat qulūbuhum ilayhi wa-ḥannat ilā liqāʾihi fa-bi-ʿilm al-yaqīn ʿabadūhu.*[471]
>
> The great ones (*al-kubarāʾ*) are the ones who have encompassed all of these knowledges, hence they know the licit and the illicit, and they have understood his (God's) planning concerning his making licit what is licit and his making illicit what is illicit, and they have experienced the knowledge of the angelic world and their hearts have felt the immensity of God; and so they are in awe of him and exalt him, and their hearts desire him and yearn to meet him. Through the knowledge of certainty they worship him.

This nesting of scholar-types results in outward knowledge (*al-ʿilm al-ẓāhir*) being the first door one must enter in order to reach the *walāya* of the *kubarāʾ*. As we mentioned before this has the effect of sanctifying the entire scholarly class since all of the signs of *walāya* are subjective rather than objective criteria in al-Tirmidhī's schema. If outward knowledge is a gatekeeper for *walāya*, it set up formidable obstacles to attaining this rank since the outward knowledge al-Tirmidhī was talking about, the *ḥalāl* (licit) and the *ḥarām* (illicit), was taught and understood in Arabic and the means for formal study were not available to the majority of Muslims.[472] Hence, we can view al-Tirmidhī's approach to *walāya* as an attempt to reform the scholarly class rather than replace it and empower lower strata in society. Al-Tirmidhī tries to reorient the scholars of outward knowledge toward a higher type of light-knowledge that he sees as the true and real knowledge. For al-Tirmidhī, the reform of the *ʿulamāʾ* eventually reforms other elements of society as their knowledge filters down to the common Muslim.

[471] Ibid, fol. 16b.
[472] See Bulliet's discussion of the obstacles to acquiring knowledge in Nīshāpūr in *The Patricians of Nishapur*, pp. 55–56.

The Optimism of al-Tirmidhī's Sainthood

Al-Tirmidhī's concept of sainthood is not simply an idea about the role of particular elite individuals who are privy to a special knowledge they derive directly from their colloquy (*ḥadīth*) with God. Rather, al-Tirmidhī initiates a very different approach and world-outlook that runs counter to the prevailing 'degeneration' framework that sees the first generation of the Islamic community (even the first three generations) as the height of perfection, only to see each successive generation as a degeneration from this pristine origin. The idea that the Islamic community is hurtling inevitably toward its eventual demise is one that permeates much of the culture of Ahl al-Hadith discourse around the corruption of modern times. The oft-cited prophetic *ḥadīth* that is used to demonstrate this viewpoint is, *khayru al-nās qarnī thumma al-ladhīna yalūnahum thumma al-ladhīna yalūnahu…*, "the best of people is my generation and then those that follow and then those that follow..."[473] The conclusion taken from Ḥadīth of this kind, that each successive generation is worse than the previous one, is an approach that has sometimes justified a certain resignation and attitude of inevitability to the difficulties and challenges that have beset Muslim communities throughout history. Al-Tirmidhī challenges this notion by disconnecting sainthood from time and stating that "sainthood from God and strict truthfulness in no way depend on time."[474] Al-Tirmidhī, through his concept of sainthood (*walāya*), offers an optimistic alternative to this sometimes pessimistic narrative. According to al-Tirmidhī there will always be true saints who offer guidance to human beings as successors to the Prophet until the end of the world comes about. These are individuals who receive the light

[473] Al-Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī in the chapter on witnesses (*al-shahādāt*), *ḥadīth* 2509.
[474] Diego R. Sarrio. "Spiritual anti-elitism: Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine of sainthood (*walāya*)." *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations.* 22 (3): 2011, p. 282.

of guidance directly from God and are in colloquy with him. Al-Tirmidhī also offers evidence from the Ḥadīth corpus to support his view that later generations of the Muslim *umma* (community) may be, in fact, greater than earlier generations. He quotes the *ḥadīth, mathalu ummatī ka-l-maṭar lā yadrī awwaluhu khayr*^{un} *am ākhiruhu*, "My community is like the rain; one doesn't know if the first is better or the last."[475] It would seem that what al-Tirmidhī means is that both the first generation and the last generation will be the best rather than the more orthodox view that the first generation is always the best. However, rather than looking at just the Muslim *umma* (community) throughout time, al-Tirmidhī is looking at the entire world community and its guidance and blessedness. Both prophets (*anbiyāʾ*) and saints (*awliyāʾ*) are sent to this world community commensurate to its state in order to establish an equilibrium. The darkness of ignorance is balanced with the light of gnosis (*maʿrifa*) that comes through these individuals. Hence, when one of al-Tirmidhī's students asks him about this point he responds with the following argument:

> *Qāla inna al-walāya wa-l-ṣiddīqiyya laysatā min al-zamān fī shayʾ wa-inna al-walī wa-l-ṣiddīq ḥujjat Allāh ʿalā khalqihi wa-ghiyāth al-khalq wa-amānihim li-annahum duʾāt*^{un} *ilā Allāh ʿalā baṣīra fa-hum fī waqt al-ḥāja aḥrā an yakūnū wa-qad baʿatha Allāh al-rusul fī al-fatrati wa-l-ʿamā wa-dawlat al-bāṭil ḥattā naʿasha al-ḥaqq wa-zahaq al-bāṭil fa-limādhā yakbur fī al-ṣudūr an yakūna fī ākhir al-zamān man yuwāzī awwalahum li-ḥājjat al-khalq ilayhim?*[476]
>
> He replied: Sainthood with God and strict truthfulness in no way depend on time. Indeed, the saint of God and the strictly truthful person are God's proof against mankind, and they are assistance and protection for mankind because they call [people] to God with discernment (*baṣīra*). Thus, it is more appropriate for them to exist during a time of need, and indeed God has sent the messengers when there was a period of no prophecy (*fatra*), blindness and the dominion of falsehood so that that which is due would be invigorated and falsehood would perish. So why does it seem too great in [men's] hearts that at the end of time someone would exist

[475] Ibid. *Nawādir,* vol. 3, p. 298.
[476] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 196–197.

> who corresponds to the persons who existed at the beginning
> because of mankind's need for them?

This understanding of light (*nūr*) and darkness (*ẓulma*) is consonant with al-Tirmidhī's approach to *ḥikma*, which is a knowledge of God's use of opposites in the world. This is not a Zoroastrian model of a cosmic battle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. Rather, as al-Tirmidhī states in his *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, both light and darkness are needed in order to know God since these are opposites created by him and they define each other.[477] Thus, it makes sense that al-Tirmidhī would see an even greater need for exemplars of truth to appear when the darkness of ignorance was greater. While this approach is 'optimistic' it is not one that promises 'progress' or the idea that society or humanity is moving towards perfection or that perfection is even an ideal. Perfection is possible on a personal level but not on a societal level. The idea is not to erase or destroy ignorance because that would be impossible in this model. Rather, the point is to 'separate' knowledge from ignorance so that there is no turbidity (*kadar*) or admixture (*ikhtilāṭ*) in the opposites and that truth and falsehood can accurately define each other as opposites. That is the function of the *ḥakīm* (sage).[478] Such a cosmography that describes the universe in terms of opposites serves to frame God's traces (*āthār*) in the world. As we have mentioned previously, al-Tirmidhī numbers these traces as four. Since they are representative of God on earth, and because God, by definition, has no opposite, those traces also have the quality of non-duality. Thus, the dualisms that al-Tirmidhī sets up are a way of pointing to and identifying these traces, or these non-duals, which derive their non-duality from God's singularity and uniqueness. In this way al-Tirmidhī's cosmology indicates an optimism about the possibilities of human spiritual achievement. Not only do we know from al-Tirmidhī that there

[477] Ibid. *Kitāb al-ḥikma*, fol. 16v.
[478] Ibid, fol. 3r.

are at least forty of God's saints (*awliyāʾ*) alive at any time and that they can be a means of guidance for humanity, but we are also aware of God's immanence and that the manifestation of his traces in the world are palpable and capable of being experienced.

The Seal of Saints

Probably the most controversial element of al-Tirmidhī's concept of sainthood is his doctrine of the seal of sainthood (*khatm al-walāya*). One of the difficulties in approaching al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of the seal of sainthood is the challenge of sorting through his contradictory statements regarding various aspects of the sealer of saints (*khātim walāya*) and his relationship to the sealer of prophets (*khātim al-nabiyyīn*), i.e., the Prophet Muḥammad. The doctrine of the seal of sainthood (*khatm al-awliyāʾ*) states that just as the Prophet Muḥammad was the sealer of prophets, similarly there exists a sealer of saints who will complete sainthood (*walāya*), just as Muḥammad completed prophecy (*nubuwwa*). Al-Tirmidhī did not view the sealer (*khātim*) as simply the last saint (*al-ākhir mabʿathan*), but also as the one who completes prophecy and sainthood respectively.[479] Critics of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of the seal of sainthood point to his passage in *Sīrat al-Awliyāʾ* in which he rejects the idea put forward by many in his time that the meaning of sealer (*khātim*) is final or last (*khātam*) with a *fatḥa* vowel on the letter *tāʾ* rather than a *kasra* as in *khātim*. This passage is often singled out to indicate that al-Tirmidhī leaves open the possibility of continuous prophecy after Muḥammad, a position unacceptable to Muslim orthodoxy. Al-Tirmidhī states, *fa-inna al-ladhī ʿamiya ʿan khabar hādhā yadhunnu anna khātim al-nabiyyīn innamā taʾwīluhu annahu ākhiruhum mabʿathan fa-ayyatu manqabatun fī hādhā? Wa-ayyu ʿalam fī hādhā? Hādhā taʾwīl al-bulah al-jahla*,[480] "Now whoever is unaware of this

[479] Ibid. *Drei Schriften*, p. 42.
[480] Ibid, p. 42.

Tradition and thinks the interpretation of 'seal[er] of the prophets, only means that he is the last of them [the prophets] to be sent – would this be a feat or a mark of distinction? This is an interpretation of stupid people and fools."[481] Al-Tirmidhī actually accedes to both interpretations based on a correct reading of this passage as well as statements he has made in others of his works.[482] So, according to al-Tirmidhī, the Prophet is both the last (*khātam*) as well as sealer (*khātim*) of the prophets while the sealer of saints (*khātim al-awliyāʾ*), or the *qāʾim bi-l-ḥujja* (the one who stands as a proof),[483] is also both the final (*khātam*) saint as well as sealer (*khātim*) of the saints. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) rejects this particular doctrine of al-Tirmidhī as unorthodox citing it as having been unknown to the earlier generations and contradictory to revealed scripture, reason and the true saints themselves.[484] It is true that the doctrine of the *khātim*/*khātam* has no precedent in the Qurʾān or Ḥadīth corpus. The question then is how al-Tirmidhī came up with this doctrine and why he put such emphasis on it. At one level al-Tirmidhī sees himself as one of the *ḥukamāʾ* and *awliyāʾ* and in that capacity sees himself as having the authority to introduce new doctrines that are based on knowledge vouchsafed to him by God. In this sense al-Tirmidhī believes that the *awliyāʾ* have a portion (*juzʾ*) of prophethood (*nubuwwa*) but not complete or unrestricted prophecy as in the case with the Prophet Muḥammad.[485]

[481] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 107. I have modified Radtke's translation here because he mistranslates the passage due to not translating the particle '*innamā*' which is a restrictive particle translated often as 'only'. This passage cannot be understood correctly without understanding how al-Tirmidhī is using this particle to indicate that in fact al-Tirmidhī disagrees with those who say that Muḥammad is 'only' the last prophet when interpreting his title *khātam/khātim al-nabiyyīn* (the sealer of prophets).
[482] Ibid. *Nadhariyyat al-Walāya*, vol. 2, pp. 377–378. Al-Tirmidhī considers the interpretation as *khātam* (final) to be a weak but valid interpretation, while the interpretation as *khātim* (sealer) as in perfecting sainthood is a deeper and grander interpretation as well as an older use of the word being closer to the usage of Prophet and his companions.
[483] This is another name al-Tirmidhī uses for the *khātim al-awliyāʾ* (sealer of the saints) who comes at the end of time and is both the last saint as well as the completion of sainthood.
[484] Ibid. *Spiritual anti-elitism*, p. 282.
[485] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 2, p. 444.

Al-Tirmidhī's approach to knowledge production is based on a gnoseology of light-knowledge that is gifted to select individuals (*al-khawāṣṣ*) by God. The main vehicle for transmitting this light-knowledge is the Qurʾānic *mathal* (analogy).[486] Ṣūfīs, such as al-Ghazālī, saw the *mathal* as representing a separate level of existence (*al-wujūd al-khayālī*) and even described the *mathal* as representing a world separate from the world of the mind (*ʿaql*) and the world of the senses (*ḥiss*).[487] Henry Corbin calls this the *mundus imaginalis* (the imaginal realm) as opposed to the 'imaginary realm' that does not have objective reality.[488] This is, in the Arabic, *al-ʿālam al-mithāl* (world of analogies), extensively used by Ibn ʿArabī and other Islamic mystics. This use of analogy in early Islamic mystical thought should be distinguished from what Umberto Eco calls 'universal analogy' as a characteristic of Renaissance Hermeticism. Renaissance Hermeticism shares many features with early Islamic *ḥikma* but also differs in important ways. According to Eco, universal analogy means that every element of the furniture of this world is connected to every other element of this sublunar world as well as to every element of the superior world. These elements are all connected to each other through analogies and resemblances.[489] There is a similar structure taking place in al-Tirmidhī's cosmology, however, the scope of analogy and resemblance are restricted through particular analogical types established through Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature. Renaissance Hermeticism is also what Eco

[486] I use the term 'analogy' here in the sense of a complex interwoven pattern of metaphors that create an image that can take on interpretive possibilities. The analogy is somewhere between both idea and archetype. It is not a complete abstraction because it is based on 'real' images but neither is it ultra-particularized such as the archetype can be when it is produced out of and includes all of the particulars of a certain type. The archetype of the father, in a Jungian sense, contains all of the particular idiosyncrasies of the category of 'father.' But the *mathal* (analogy), as used by al-Tirmidhī, is a set of metaphors that together create a pattern through a network of interrelations that are supported by human experience.

[487] Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī. *Fayṣal al-tafriqa bayna al-Islām wa-l-zandaqa maʿa al-risāla al-waʿẓīya wa-kitāb mishkāt al-anwār wa-risālat al-ʿaqāʾid wa-l-waʿẓ ilā Malik Shāh wa-risālat al-tawḥīd. Wa-yalīhum kitāb al-tajrīd fī kalimat al-tawḥīd li-Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī.* Ed. Muḥammad badr al-Dīn al-Naʿisānī. Al-Astānah: Jamālī wa-Khānjī. 1907, p. 6.

[488] Henry Corbin. "Mundus imaginalis, the imaginary and the imaginal." *Spring*, 1972: 1–19. New York: Analytical Psychology Club of New York, Inc. 1972, p. 1.

[489] Eco, Umberto. *The limits of interpretation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1994, p. 24.

calls a 'strong Neoplatonism' or an emasculated Neoplatonism, strengthened by Christian ideas of divine transcendence.[490] This strong Neoplatonic view holds that all elements of the world are essentially non-dual because they emanate from the divine one. This, in fact, is different than al-Tirmidhī's Pythagorean approach, which views the world in terms of dualities that point to God's non-duality. This approach does not negate dualism as does Hermeticism. Furthermore, the analogies (*amthāl*) that al-Tirmidhī uses combine dualities; however, these dualities exist as *coincidentia oppositorum* in the imaginal space and not in the world of matter. As we mentioned in Chapter 4, early Islamic mystics like al-Tustarī and al-Tirmidhī saw duality in the world as a means of indicating God's non-dual attributes as they manifest in the world.

For al-Tirmidhī, the *mathal* (analogy) is that which connects the *ghayb* (unseen) to the seen world (*al-ʿālam al-mudrak*), hence we can see how important it is to his gnoseology. If we think of the different knowledge categories in Islamic thought we can see that they each produce particular religious and cultural artifacts in Islamic civilization. Knowledge as Ḥadīth, for example, produces Ḥadīth literatures of all kinds. Even Ṣūfī literature did not escape the all-encompassing reach of *isnād* (genealogy) and Ḥadīth conventions as a basis for establishing authoritative knowledge. The *mathal* (analogy) is a vehicle for the expression of the knowledge producing agent of light (*nūr*) in al-Tirmidhī's approach. Al-Tirmidhī characterizes the heart as the place where the light of certainty resides. This light allows the knower of God (*ʿārif*) to 'see' aspects of the unseen (*al-ghayb*) through *firāsa* (insight).[491] The *mathal* (analogy) for al-Tirmdihī captures unseen meanings in a way that enables them to be understood by those who do not have access to the unseen realm. Al-Tirmidhī writes, *fa-l-amthāl namūdhajāt al-ḥikma li-mā ghāba ʿan al-asmāʿ wa-l-abṣār li-tahtadī al-nufūs bi-mā adrakat ʿiyānan*, "Analogies are the

[490] Ibid, p. 18.
[491] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 241.

forms of wisdom for that which is unseen to the ears and eyes in order that people may be guided by what they perceive directly."[492]

Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of the seal of sainthood (*khatm al-walāya*) becomes clearer if we understand that the seal (*khatm*) and the sealer (*khātim*/*khātam*) derive from a *mathal* (analogy) that al-Tirmidhī pulls from both Islamic and Persian lore. Al-Tirmidhī uses the *mathal* (analogy) as a philosophical tool to produce the various aspects of his gnoseology. In other words, he is seeking topoi and motifs that lend themselves to the *mathal* (analogy) through his survey of both Islamic and non-Islamic lore and then he uses these *amthāl* (analogies) to structure the landscape of his thought. Al-Tirmidhī has a book called *al-Amthāl min al-Qurʾān wa-l-Sunna* listing over two hundred and thirty *amthāl* (analogies) from Islamic lore. One of the *amthāl* (analogies) listed in this book is the *khawātīm* (plural for *khātam* – ring). Later we will explain the connection between the doctrine of the *khātim*/*khātam* (sealer/final) of the *awliyāʾ* (the saints) and the *khātam* (seal ring). However, the first point we want to make here is that the *khātam* (seal ring) is conceived by al-Tirmidhī to be a *mathal* (analogy) that helps configure the light-knowledge of the unseen (*ghayb*). I have included here in extenso al-Tirmidhī's discussion of the *khātam* (ring – plural, *khawātīm*) in order to demonstrate the relationship between al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and his notion of the *mathal* (analogy). A portion of this excerpt is also found in al-Tirmidhī's *IA* as well as indirect references to it in his *NU*:

> *Wa-hādhā al-kalām innamā yakhruju min hādhihi al-afwāh ḥurūf*^{an} *muʾallafatan wa-l-anwār kiswatuhā maʿahā nazalat li-l-ʿibād min al-samāʿ wa-l-ʿibād mutafāwatunā fī al-nuṭqi bi-hādhihi al-kalima ka-l-shaʾni fī al-anwār.*
>
> *Wa-mathalu dhālika mathalu al-khawātīm fa-laysa bayna khawātīm al-nās kathīru tafāwut*^{in} *fa-inna aktharuhā fīmā bayna mithqāl wa-mithqālayn fa-ʿāmmatu awzānihā bi-hādhā al-qadri*

[492] Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. *Al-Amthāl min al-kitāb wa-l-sunna*. Ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī. Al-Fajāllah al-Qāhirah: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr. 1975, p. 17.

min al-fiḍḍa aw min al-dhahab innamā al-shaʾnu fī al-fuṣūṣ allatī tabāyanat jawāhiruha fa-rubba jawhari faṣṣin li-khatamin lā usāwī dirham^{an} wa-rubba faṣṣ^{in} tablughu qīmatuhu ālāf^{an} min al-darāhim wa-l-danānīr. Fa-kadhā al-nuṭqu bi-hādhihi al-kalimati mutafāwat^{un} fī ibrāzihā lafẓan wa-qirāʾat^{an} wa duʿāʾan wa-lākin al-tafāwutu fī al-maʿādin allatī fīhā hādhihi al-anwār wa-ʿilmu hādhā al-kalām.

Wa-tafāwutu hādhā akthar min tafāwutu al-fuṣūṣ aḍʿāf^{an} fa-kalimat^{un} takhruju min qalbin maʿdinu dhālika al-qalb al-dunyā fa-dhāka yubghī bihi al-thawāb wa-kalimat^{un} takhruju min qalb^{in} maʿdinu dhālika al-qalb al-ʿuqbā wa-kalimat^{un} takhruju min qalb^{in} maʿdinu dhālika al-qalb al-malakūt wa-kalimat^{un} takhruju min qalb^{in} maʿdinu dhālika al-qalb mālik al-mulk bayna yadayhi. Fa-innamā istanāra qalbuhu bi-dhālik al-nūr wa-kullu kalām^{in} yakhruju minhu min dhālika al-nūr.[493]

These words [there is no god but God, glory be to God, God is great, there is no power or ability save through God] only exits from these mouths as conjoined letters while lights clothe them and were sent down with those words from Heaven for [God's] servants. [His] servants differ in the pronunciation of these words just as they differ in the lights [that clothe them].

The analogy (*mathal*) of this is the analogy of rings (*khawātīm*). There is not much difference between the rings of people. Most of them are between one and two ounces [in weight]. Most of the weight of these rings is the amount of silver or gold in them. The only real consideration though is with the bezels whose gems differ. It could be that the gem of a particular bezel for a ring does not equal even a silver piece in value. However, it could also be that the value of the bezel could reach thousands of gold and silver pieces. Likewise, the pronunciation of these words differs in the way they are pronounced aloud in reading and supplication. However, the true difference is in the mines in which these lights are found and the cognizance of these words.

This difference is many times greater than the actual differences between bezels. A word may exit the heart of someone while the mine of that heart is in fact this world; such a one desires reward by it. Another word may exit the heart of someone while the mine of that heart is recompense. Another word exits the heart of another person while the mine of that heart is the angelic realm. Another word exits the heart of yet another person while the mine of that heart stands before the Possessor of all creation. The heart

[493] Ibid, pp. 249–250.

> of that person is enlightened by that light and all speech that exits from him is from that light.

The *khātam* (ring) is an ancient motif found throughout the Near East and is important in biblical literature. It is not strange then that we would find the ring motif in early stories of the Prophet. According to the Sīra (early biographical) literature, the Prophet Muḥammad had a seal ring made for him out of silver with the words "Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh" engraved on the ring with the name of God, Allāh, on top. This ring was passed on to each successive Caliph from Abū Bakr to ʿUmar and then to ʿUthmān. Then, according to tradition, the Caliph ʿUthmān lost the ring when it fell into a well. In addition to the ring motif in the early Sīra literature, al-Tirmidhī also references a *ḥadīth* in which God creates Adam from dust and kneads this dust with the water of Paradise, then crowns Adam and then places on his finger the ring of a king.[494]

For al-Tirmidhī, the ring is a *mathal* (analogy) that gathers together a multitude of metaphors that communicate a particular 'truth' he is trying to express. The ring (*khātam*) by itself is not the *mathal* (analogy). The actual ring *mathal* (analogy) in its entirety includes a ring that contains a bezel with a seal engraving that can be used for particular purposes within a network of social and semantic relationships. In this sense the ring has a significant interpretive potential. It can signify the king as well as *khilāfa* (successorship) to the Prophet. Al-Tirmidhī presents the ring *mathal* as communicating a hidden truth through a prophetic analogy that transmits knowledge as light. In this sense, the meaning of this *mathal* and its subsequent interpretation becomes less subjective, since the analogy makes use of a material object that has real functions in the social and semantic domains, and with regard to the realm of religious function, it can even be connected to customs attributed to the Prophet. In the imaginal realm the *mathal* of the ring takes on its own reality; it is the image of a real material object with all of its

[494] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 6, p. 219.

real world relationships bound up within it so that it becomes a means for creating an analogy. Thus, the ring connects 'truths' about God to 'truths' in the world in a way that is accessible to human perception. Not all material objects carry this kind of significance and for al-Tirmidhī it is the *amthāl* (pl. *mathal*) of the Qurʾān and the Prophetic Sunna that provide a template for him to create his own *amthāl*. For example, the *mathal* of the ring is not mentioned as a specific *mathal* in the Qurʾān or the Ḥadīth, but it is chosen by al-Tirmidhī to illustrate the way God organizes the world, which is what al-Tirmidhī calls *al-tadbīr*.[495] Knowledge of God's *tadbīr* (organization, planning) of the universe is one of the hallmarks of the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) who were discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.[496] Hence, the ability to use analogies to interpret the world is one of the functions of the *ḥukamāʾ* in al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology.

Al-Tirmidhī draws a connection for us between the ring (*khātam*) and the sealer/final saint (*khātim*/*khātam al-awliyāʾ*) in his autobiography *Buduw Shaʾn*. At first glance the ring *mathal* seems to be separate from al-Tirmidhī's discussion of the sealer of saints. The ring *mathal* is used by al-Tirmidhī in *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ* and *al-Amthāl min al-Qurʾān wa-l-Sunna* primarily to explain the difference between the *ʿāmma* (the common believers) and the *khāṣṣa* (elite) or, as al-Tirmidhī also calls them, the *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh*[497] and the *awliyāʾ Allāh*.[498] As we saw in the above quote from al-Tirmidhī's *al-Amthāl*, all believers are similar to the ring in that the weight of the silver in each ring is approximately the same. What determines the real value is the price of the bezel (ring stone) and it is the rare bezels that are mined deep within the

[495] Ibid. *Al-Amthāl*, p. 17.
[496] Ibid. *Kitāb Bayān al-ʿIlm*, fol. 16a.
[497] These are the saints who benefit from God's grace by the mere fact of making the testimony of faith (*shahāda*) and so God gives them his protection and grace because of a right (*ḥaqq*) that they have with God by virtue of this statement.
[498] These are the true saints who have been given protection and amnesty in this life and the next and receive divine inspiration from God. They are the ones who have been given victory over their carnal souls by God and are a means of protection and blessing for humanity.

earth that are considered the most expensive. Metaphorically speaking, when the *awliyāʾ Allāh* (the true saints) say the *adhkār* (formulas for remembering God), these words, while seeming to be similar on the surface actually originate from different "mines" (*maʿādin*), which represent the hearts of different believers and the relative attachment of these hearts to God. While this discussion of the ring *mathal* seeks to elaborate the distinction between different types of believers, al-Tirmidhī also uses the ring as a symbol to indicate the sealer of saints. At the end of his autobiography al-Tirmidhī relates a dream in which his wife hears a voice telling her in Persian, *nigīnē man torā dādham*, "I have given you a seal ring."[499] When taken in the context of the other dreams of al-Tirmidhī's wife, we can interpret this to mean that al-Tirmidhī is either the sealer of saints, or one of the forty saints of his time, completing their number, as symbolized by the seal ring that was given to his wife. The ring *mathal* not only speaks about the difference between the types of believers, but also functions as a symbol for the sealer of saints. The seals on rings in eastern Iran would often be cut directly into the bezel as can be seen in some examples from 11th- and 12th-century C.E. Khurāsān. (See figure 1 below) These seal rings have words carved into them as opposed to human or animal figures that we find in Byzantine and Sassanid seal rings, possibly due to Islamic mores. Here we can see many of the aspects of al-Tirmidhī's notion of sainthood and the sealer of saints represented in a single material object. The silver ring, the bezel, the seal carving on the bezel and the lexical nature of these seal carvings all touch upon important aspects of al-Tirmidhī's structure of sainthood and the sealer of saints.

[499] Ibid. *Kitāb khatm al-awliyāʾ*, p. 31.

Figure 1: 1. One bezel set with a banded agate, engraved *kufic* inscription *Musa Ibn Ahmad*. 2cm high. 2. The other similar ring is bezel set with engraved carnelian, also 2cm high. 3. One cast gold ring 2.5cm high. 4. Finally a silver ring with inscribed carnelian, also 2.5cm high.https://awalimofstormhold.wordpress.com/tag/jewelry/page/3/

We can possibly say that the ring *mathal* itself is structuring the various relationships between these different aspects of sainthood in al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and was partly his inspiration for his book *SA*, which discusses in detail his doctrine of the sealer of saints (*khātim*/*khātam al-awliyāʾ*). Evidence in this regard is that al-Tirmidhī mentions a date in his autobiography with respect to the dream of his wife in which she is gifted a seal-ring (*nigīnē*) representing al-Tirmidhī himself. This was in June of 883 C.E. or Dhū al-Qāʿda of 269 A.H.[500] It is not clear exactly when al-Tirmidhī wrote his *SA*, but we know that he did so sometime after the death of the Khurāsānian mystic and his contemporary Yaḥyā b. Muʿādh al-Rāzī (d. 258/872). Also in his autobiography, al-Tirmidhī indicates that he did not start teaching formally until after the period of insurrection that occurred around 256/870 during the Ṣaffārid rebellion.[501] In his autobiography Al-Tirmidhī mentions that after this event he moved from

[500] Ibid. *Concept*, pp. 34–35.
[501] Ibid, p. 20.

teaching sessions in his house to the *masjid* where he began teaching openly to many students. The confident approach of al-Tirmidhī in *SA* as well as its polished form, polemical tone, and back and forth question and answer format between himself and a student indicate that *SA* was likely the result of many years of teaching. This suggests that al-Tirmidhī's *SA* probably came to its finished form sometime around the writing of his autobiography and the narrating of his wife's dream some ten years after he began teaching formally. The important point here is not to establish that the dream of the ring *mathal* came first, but that both ideas were functioning at approximately the same time in al-Tirmidhī's career. The ring *mathal* still has a function even in al-Tirmidhī's *SA* where al-Tirmidhī describes the sealing of prophethood as being like a royal decree that is written and then stamped with a seal.[502] The ring *mathal* is found throughout al-Tirmidhī's works and is used to explain the nature of the sealer (*khātim*/*khātam*) and the seal (*khatm*). Not only is the ring *mathal* used to discuss sainthood, but al-Tirmidhī uses it as a framework to discuss other topics such as the word *āmīn* (Amen), which al-Tirmidhī says is a *khatm* (seal) for supplication (*duʿāʾ*). The word *āmīn* (Amen), when used at the end of a supplication to God, seals it and protects the supplication from being intercepted or modified in any way by the devil.[503] Here, we can see that the ring *mathal* structures multiple topics in al-Tirmidhī's works.

The ring *mathal* is an appropriate analogy for the paradigm of 'knowledge as light' found throughout al-Tirmidhī's works. The ring *mathal* makes use of the light metaphor since the bezel of a ring refracts light in special ways depending on the type and quality of the stone. Thus, with this analogy we can think of the heart of the saint as refracting spiritual light-knowledge depending on the mine/source (*maʿdin*) of his heart. Hence, the *mathal* (analogy) is a way of

[502] Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, pp. 109–110.
[503] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, pp. 483–484.

thinking about God and the world and is a way of capturing and presenting knowledge as light. Plato employs analogical reasoning in the analogy of the cave in his dialog *The Republic*. The cave, the prisoners, as well as the play of light and darkness are all elements of Plato's analogy and serve to explain a 'reality' that would otherwise be imperceptible to the senses. The 'light' of the sun in Plato's analogy can be interpreted as the "true knowledge of the forms" that is too bright for normal human beings to see.[504] Plato provides us with two other analogies in *The Republic*, which are the Divided Line and the Analogy of the Sun. For Plato, though, analogy is not the main vehicle for dispensing knowledge, rather, dialectic is at the center of Plato's epistemology.[505] Plato's three analogies pale in comparison to al-Tirmidhī's over two hundred analogies in his book *al-Amthāl min al-Qurʾān wa-l-Sunna*. For al-Tirmidhī, the *mathal* (analogy) is the means par excellence for communicating knowledge bequeathed by God and thinking about the world. We will see in the next chapter how the *mathal* can be interpreted and reinterpreted as well as extended to 'explore' its field of possibilities. As we will see in Chapter 6 Ibn ʿArabī takes al-Tirmidhī's ring *mathal* and reinvents it to develop an even more elaborate doctrine of sainthood building on al-Tirmidhī's approach.

For al-Tirmidhī, the sealer of the saints (*khātim*/*khātam al-awliya*) completes sainthood (*walāya*) by encompassing all of the names of God just as the Prophet completes (*khatama*) prophethood (*nubuwwa*) by encompassing all of the names of God. In this way the sealer of the saints mirrors the Prophet's states and stations at the level of sainthood (*walāya*) just below prophethood.[506] This type of mirroring between sainthood and prophethood was no doubt troubling to many Muslim scholars, particularly Ibn Taymiyya. If this mirroring is, in fact, true,

[504] Robert J. Fogelin. "Three Platonic Dialogs," *The Philosophical Review*. Vol. 80, (No. 3, Jul.) 1971, p. 372.
[505] N. Notomi. "Socratic Dialogue and Platonic Dialectic. How the soul knows in the Republic." *Plato-The Internet Journal of the International Plato Society*. (Plato 4). 2004.
[506] Ibid. *Nadhariyyat al-Walāya*, pp. 374–375.

then what is the real difference between the sealer of the saints and the sealer of the prophets? The ring *mathal* is essential to explaining this difference in al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and epistemology. The seal/sealer (*khatam*/*khātim*) belongs ultimately to God and is a function of his *tadbīr* (organization and planning) of the world. Prophethood is likened to a document that contains certain kinds of knowledge that, when completed, is folded and stamped with a seal. Similarly, sainthood and the particular knowledge it contains is like another document that, when completed, is folded and sealed with its own seal. Each seal has the same mark of God's kingship but the stone in each is different because they come from different mines (*maʿādin*) and it is the quality of the stones that causes them to reflect God's light differently.

Sainthood Creates a Third Space

We discussed in Chapter 2 how al-Tirmidhī uses a Pythagorean sense of *ḥikma* (wisdom) to view the world as arranged by opposites (*aḍdād*) that, in turn, point to an underlying unitary principle. For al-Tirmidhī, this principle was Allāh, who created the world as opposites. Adopting aspects of a Pythagorean cosmology was not difficult for al-Tirmidhī because this basic structure is clearly explicated in the Qurʾān, specifically in verses 49 and 50 of Chapter 51, al-Dhāriyāt, and supported by many other verses throughout the Qurʾān,[507] *wa-min kulli shayʾin khalaqnā zawjayni laʿallakum tadhakkarūn fa-firrū ilā Allāh innī lakum minhu nadhīrun mubīn*, "And of everything we have created pairs so that perhaps you will remember, so flee to God, I am only a clear warner for you." The Qurʾān clearly views the world as a place of dualities, not in a strictly antagonistic sense as in Zoroastrian cosmology, but as a means to understand God. The Qurʾānic discussion of marriage is a case in point in which the *zawj* (spouse-pair-opposite)

[507] For other verses in the Qurʾān that discuss creation in pairs see 13:3, 20:53, 20:131, 26:7, 30:21, 35:11, 36:36, 42:11 and 43:12.

is created in order for God's attributes to manifest, for example, *mawadda* (love) and *raḥma* (mercy) occur between (*bayn*) the two spouses (*al-zawjayn*) and is a sign (*āya*) of God. These attributes are characterized in a non-dual sense because they are traces of God who is described in the Qurʾān as *al-wadūd* (the loving) and *al-raḥmān* (the all-merciful).[508] Al-Tirmidhī's cosmology can be considered Pythagorean in the sense that Pythagorean notions fit well into his Qurʾānic worldview.

For al-Tirmidhī, God and his attributes are not the only non-dual'. God's "traces" in the world also take on an aspect of God's non-duality and are thus representative of God on earth.[509] These four traces (*āthār*) of God are: the Qurʾan, the *sulṭān* (temporal ruler in an abstract sense of representing God's power), the Kaʿba (God's house) and the saints (*awliyāʾ*). In *NU* al-Tirmidhī writes about these four traces:

> *fa-bi-hāʾulāʾ al-arbaʿ taqūm al-arḍ fa-idhā danā qiyām al-sāʿa rafaʿa al-qurʾān wa-hudimat al-kaʿba wa-dhahaba al-sulṭān wa-qubiḍa al-awliyāʾ ʿan ākhirihim fa-lam yabqa fī al-arḍ dhū ḥurma fa-l-mutanabbihūna innamā maʾkhudhuhum min al-qurʾān laṭāʾifuhu wa-ṭalāwatuhu wa-labaquhu wa-min al-sulṭān haybat ẓillihi wa-lā yalḥaẓūna ilā afʿālihim wa-sīratihim wa-min al-bayti ilā waqārihi lā ilā tilk al-aḥjāri wa-l-bunyāni wa-min al-walī ilā nūri jalālihi al-ladhī qad ashraqa fī ṣadrihi.*[510]
>
> Thus, through these four the earth persists. So if the Hour comes close, the Qurʾān will be lifted and the Kaʿba will be destroyed and the temporal ruler will disappear, and the souls of the saints, up to the last of them, will be taken and there will not remain on Earth any sacred person. Those who are aware simply take from the Qurʾān its subtleties and its beauty and its refinement; and from the temporal ruler the awesomeness of his shadow but not [his] actions or [his] example; and from the House of God they perceive God's dignity but not the stones and structure; and from the saint they

[508] Qurʾān 30:21
[509] Al-Tirmidhī specifically says that God has no opposite, *lā ḍidda lahu*, "He has no opposite." Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 1, p. 21. The four traces of God each have a non-dual character. There is only one Kaʿba, the Qurʾān represents the attribute of God's speech (*kalām*) which borrows from God's non-duality, the *sulṭān* (temporal ruler of all the Muslims) is God's shadow on earth (*ẓillihi*) and the saints (*awliyāʾ*) attain the station (*manzil*) of *fardāniyya* which has the character of non-duality.
[510] Ibid, vol. 3, p. 424.

> perceive the light of God's majesty which dawns in the saint's heart.

These four traces are sources of protection for humanity because, for al-Tirmidhī, it is through them that the world is protected by God from destruction. The Kaʿba in Makka is described as a *ḥaram* (sacred precinct) in which fighting or killing is not allowed.[511] The role of the *sulṭān* (the temporal ruler) is to maintain order and justice such that people's rights are not transgressed and the ideal ruler is someone who is a protection for people.[512] The Qurʾān, or God's speech (*kalām*), has a sanctity (*ḥurma*) that makes it inviolable to touch unless one is ritually purified through ablution.[513] The saint (*walī*) is a protection for the land he lives in and because of him the crops are watered and the animals fed.[514] Al-Tirmidhī mentions that when a believer beholds any of these four things, his heart finds ease and calmness (*istarwaḥa*).[515] The saints, as representatives of God's trace on earth, become not only a means of witnessing God's light, but are also loci for God's mercy and protection. It appears that al-Tirmidhī is saying that if a person can find one of these saints, then he can find protection and security can be found through the saint's blessing since the heart of the saint occupies a station at which God's light enters the world.

For al-Tirmidhī, the dualisms in the world provide a framework to identify the non-dual traces of God in the world. At the end of Chapter 2 we discussed the non-dual station of the saint (*walī*), which is called *fardāniyya* (non-duality, solitariness). This station is unique and is reserved for the highest saints. In *KH* al-Tirmidhī provides us with a *mathal* to explain the non-dual position of the saint (*walī*) and how this creates a safe space for those who are connected to

[511] Ibid, pp. 132–133.
[512] Ibid, p. 401.
[513] Ibid, pp. 332–334.
[514] Ibid, pp. 263–264.
[515] Ibid, p. 172.

the saint (*walī*). Al-Tirmidhī compares the saint (*walī*) to a shepherd who has a flock of sheep. When predators attack the sheep the shepherd's dogs fight these predators and kill them. The shepherd and his flock remain safe while the dogs and predators fight each other.[516] Al-Tirmidhī mentions how the sheep dog was, at one time, a predator itself, but that through the influence of the shepherd becomes the opposite of its original nature and fights off the other predators. Here, the non-dual position of the shepherd actually gives rise to the duality that, in turn, defines the non-duality. Here, the saint (*walī*), as a conduit for God's light and a trace of God in the world, is a means for establishing safe spaces that are impervious to the interaction of opposites that can sometimes, but not always, be antagonistic.

Conclusion

Al-Tirmidhī's vision of sainthood clearly demonstrates a great deal of versatility. By combining and amalgamating various trends in early Islamic thought and mysticism, al-Tirmidhī was able to put forward ideas that were socially and politically relevant to his time. And not only were they relevant, but they had powerful transformative potential. Al-Tirmidhī takes the light motif and places it at the center of his gnoseology similar to the way the proto-Shīʿīs had construed the *ʿilm* (knowledge) of their imams and the proto-Sunnīs of Madīna construed the charisma of the prophetic legacy. Al-Tirmidhī clearly belonged to the discourse stream of proto-Sunnism, however, it wasn't until the arrival of al-Tirmidhī that the light-motif takes center stage amongst the Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ*. When al-Tirmidhī combines this light motif with sainthood, which was a category that was already established in Ḥanafī theological discourse, the result is a new spiritual geography. Knowledge, as light, resides in the hearts of living saints who are

[516] Ibid. *Kitāb al-ḥikma,* fol. 6v.

undesignated except by spiritual markers within the Muslim community. They exist as the conduits through whom God continues to provide guidance to humanity as successors to the Prophet. Hence, God's light flows into the world through the hearts of these men and women if they can only be found. This doctrine provides a counterweight to the sometimes fatalistic and pessimistic orthodox view that the Muslim community is in a continual state of decline moving headlong toward the final destruction of both mankind and the world at the end of time. Al-Tirmidhī's eschatology also admits to an end of the world, but explains that before that time God's guidance for humanity is always commensurate with the level of ignorance and darkness that is simultaneously occurring in the world. Hence, sainthood here can address very important theological views about God's involvement in the world and the continuation of prophecy and sainthood.

One of the most important aspects of al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology of sainthood deals with the figure of the sealer of saints (*khātim*/*khātam al-awliyāʾ*). With this doctrine we may gain an insight into how al-Tirmidhī's thought develops through the use of *amthāl* (analogies). By understanding al-Tirmidhī's use of the *mathal* we can better understand how he conceived the function of the sealer of saints and either reconciled this doctrine with more orthodox theological views about the nature of revelation and prophethood. The doctrine of the sealer of saints is derived from al-Tirmidhī's episteme of light-knowledge and al-Tirmidhī articulates it in terms of its embodiment in the form of the *mathal* (analogy). By understanding this 'thought process' of analogizing we can better understand how Ibn ʿArabī extends the *mathal* of the ring to explicate an even more elaborate doctrine of sainthood.

Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood also has implications for the social and political sphere. By separating temporal authority from religious authority, al-Tirmidhī opens up religious

authority to new claimants. However, at the same time, he attempts to restrict this authority by making outward religious knowledge a prerequisite for it. The saints, however, as traces of God on earth, create safe spaces that are a protection for humanity. This idea inspired early Ṣūfīs like al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī to integrate this structure into Sufism. In time, the Ṣūfī *shaykh* would come to function as a buffer between ordinary Muslims and the unmitigated power of the state, which serves to affirm al-Tirmidhī's vision of *walāya*.

Chapter 6

Sainthood and Wisdom in the Later Islamic Mystical Tradition:

Ibn ʿArabī and the Shādhiliyya

Despite the plethora of research on Ibn ʿArabī, few Ibn ʿArabī scholars have read al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī closely. Ibn ʿArabī not only cites al-Tirmidhī by name, but his works are tightly connected to motifs and approaches inaugurated by al-Tirmidhī. Based on our preceding discussion of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*, we will examine in this chapter how this doctrine provides important interpretative potential for understanding Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya*. The ring *mathal*, in particular, is used by Ibn ʿArabī to structure his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (*The Ring Stones of Wisdom*). Another less well known continuation of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* is in the *ḥikma* tradition of the early Shādhilī masters of the Shādhilī Ṭarīqa.

In Chapters 3 and 4 we discussed how al-Tirmidhī's influence on the Islamic mystical tradition was not limited to his influence on Ibn ʿArabī. Al-Tirmidhī played an important role in the development of Sufism in the great mystical synthesis of the 5th/11th-century in Nīshāpūr and this had a decisive impact on the form Sufism would take thereafter. Al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood (*walāya*) played a crucial role in establishing the religious authority of the Ṣūfī *shaykh*. Even Ibn ʿArabī's debt to al-Tirmidhī is not completely appreciated despite important contributions to this study by Chodkiewicz. This has partly been due to an incomplete appreciation of some of al-Tirmidhī's foundational concepts. As a result of our further examination of al-Tirmidhī's ring *mathal,* we can see that Ibn ʿArabī takes the main structure of

his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* from al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood, although he has clearly made important additions and changes. Similarly, the founders of the Shādhilī Ṭarīqa (Ṣūfī brotherhood) in North Africa relied heavily on al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* and expanded his approach to *ḥikma*.

The Ring *Mathal* in Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*

The influence of al-Tirmidhī on the thought of Ibn ʿArabī has been discussed widely in the field of Islamic mysticism.[517] Ibn ʿArabī engages al-Tirmidhī directly and quotes him in a number of his works, primarily his *al-Futuḥāt al-Makkiyya* (*The Meccan Revelations*) and *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (*The Ring Stones of Wisdom*). Probably most fascinating is the series of one hundred and fifty-seven questions that al-Tirmidhī poses to anyone who would claim sainthood. These questions are quite elusive and arcane and no one seems to have attempted to answer them until Ibn ʿArabī devoted a treatise to this task under the title *al-Jawāb al-Mustaqīm ʿammā saʾala ʿanhu al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥakīm* (*The Direct Reply to the Questions of al-Tirmidhī the Ḥakīm*). These answers were then included in chapter seventy-three of *al-Futuḥāt* including more detail than the original work.[518] According to Radtke, Ibn ʿArabī merely uses al-Tirmidhī's questions as a platform to express his own ideas.[519] This view oversimplifies a fascinating example of intertextuality between authors who lived some three hundred years apart. Ibn ʿArabī's answers are often quite specific about details that cannot be corroborated in any way, such as the number of stations (*manāzil*) of the saints (*awliyāʾ*). For example, Ibn ʿArabī says there are two hundred

[517] Osman Yahya, Michel Chodkiewicz, Bernd Ratke, Richard McGregor, Alexander Knysh, Binyamin Abrahamov et al.
[518] Michel Chodkiewicz. *Seal of the saints: prophethood and sainthood in the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabī*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society. 1993, p. 32.
[519] Bernd Radtke. "The Concepts of Walāya in Early Sufism," in L. Lewinsohn (ed.), *The Heritage of Sufism*. vol. I. 1999, p. 487.

and forty-eight thousand spiritual (*maʿnawiyya*) stations.[520] In effect, Ibn ʿArabī is displaying his qualifications to speak about sainthood by answering al-Tirmidhī's challenge and the answers are both confident and often exact in nature. As Chodkiewicz remarks, it is a spiritual tournament between two solitaires and Ibn ʿArabī takes up the challenge triumphantly.[521] Ibn ʿArabī, himself, identified al-Tirmidhī's questions as a test (*imtiḥān*).

Like al-Tirmidhī, sainthood (*walāya*) for Ibn ʿArabī forms one of the most central and important aspects of his thought.[522] The *FH* is a summary of Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya* and a central theme in this work is the ring (*khātam*). We will attempt to demonstrate how the ring *mathal*, which Ibn ʿArabī clearly adopts from al-Tirmidhī, can only be completely understood in light of al-Tirmidhī's discussion of the ring (*khātam*) and the ring stone (*faṣṣ*). In his introduction to Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ,* Abū ʿAlā ʿAfīfī laments Ibn ʿArabī's indirect figurative approach and vague allusions, which seem to complicate the efforts of the reader to understand exactly what Ibn ʿArabī is often talking about.[523] For ʿAfīfī, Ibn ʿArabī makes "the power of thought a great deal subservient to the power of his imagination."[524] Part of the challenge in understanding Ibn ʿArabī is understanding the *amthāl* (analogies) that form the connection between the unseen world and the seen world just as we have shown with al-Tirmidhī.[525] As Corbin tells us, these

[520] Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, p. 53.
[521] Ibid, p. 32.
[522] Ibid, p. 47.
[523] Ibn ʿArabī, Muhyī al-Dīn. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam, li-Muḥyī al-Dīn b. ʿArabī wa-l-taʿlīqāt ʿalayh bi-qalam Abū al-ʿIlā ʿAfīfī*. Ed. A. E. ʿAfīfī. Bayrūt: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī. 1966, p. 19.
[524] Ibid, p. 19.
[525] Sleep is the realm of imagination for Ibn ʿArabī and sleep is the intermediate realm between life and death, it is a type of living death and in that sense is an intermediate realm between the opposites of life and death. It is in this realm that we find the imaginal and *amthāl* (analogies) are the substance of dreams. In this realm the dreamer can access disembodied intelligible entities in the form of corporeal sensory objects. According to Ibn ʿArabī, dreams must always be interpreted and their interpretation requires special knowledge from God. Felek, Özgen, and Alexander D. Knysh. *Dreams and visions in Islamic societies*. Albany: State University of New York Press. 2012, pp. 1–3.

amthāl (analogies) are as real for Ibn ʿArabī as the physical world.[526] Given the strong connection between Ibn ʿArabī and al-Tirmidhī it is strange that, as of yet, no one has drawn a comparison between the structure of Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* and the ring *mathal* of al-Tirmidhī. This comparison is highly significant because it indicates the extent of al-Tirmidhī's influence on the Islamic doctrine of sainthood in its later form and helps to clarify important aspects of Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine that are often difficult to interpret.

Michel Chodkiewicz is probably the foremost expert on Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of sainthood. Nevertheless, it is unclear why he does not give more importance to the ring *mathal*. One possible reason for this is that I believe he misinterprets some aspects of the ring *mathal* itself. Chodkiewicz writes:

> The setting (*faṣṣ*, plural *fuṣūṣ*) of a ring is the part which encloses the precious stone. The word recurs in the title of each chapter where it is followed by two determinants: a 'wisdom' (*ḥikma*), which is itself qualified by an adjective; and a 'word' (*kalima*) connected with one of the twenty-seven prophets. Thus, for example, we have 'the setting of divine wisdom in the Word of Adam', 'the setting of the wisdom of the heart in the Word of Shuʿayb', and so on. In this way a series of spiritual types is built up, of whom each is in some sense defined as the intersection of an aspect of divine Wisdom with the human vessel that encloses it and thereby imposes its own limits on it. As we shall see, this structure is in no way a mere rhetorical device, but corresponds symbolically with the actual structure of *walāya*.[527]

While Chodkiewicz indicates the importance of the ring to Ibn ʿArabī's structure of *walāya* and mentions that this will be demonstrated later in the book, we do not find the topic addressed in much detail later in his work. In fact, Chodkiewicz mistakenly interprets the word *faṣṣ* (pl. *fuṣūṣ*) to mean the "part which encloses the precious stone", rather than the stone itself. This may be

[526] Ibid. *Mundus Imaginalis*, p. 5. We can distinguish these analogies from the Platonic Forms in that they are not the abstract sources of physical objects in the world, but rather a vehicle for apprehending divine knowledge.
[527] Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, pp. 48–49.

one reason that he does not fully explicate the implications of the ring *mathal* for interpreting Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya*. The word *faṣṣ* (pl. *fuṣūṣ*) in Arabic means the stone that is enclosed by the ring and not the casing itself that encloses the stone as Chodkiewicz indicates.[528] This interpretation of the word *faṣṣ*, as meaning the setting or the precious stone that is set in a ring, is how al-Tirmidhī presents the ring *mathal*. The close correspondence between al-Tirmidhī's ring *mathal* and Ibn ʿArabī's ring imagery in the *Fuṣūṣ* further reinforces this interpretation.

In his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* Ibn ʿArabī describes the knowledge-types of twenty-seven prophets, each with a different wisdom (*ḥikma*), word (*kalima*) and stone (*faṣṣ*). As Chodkiewicz mentions, the first section in the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* is the chapter titled: "The Ring Stone of Divine Wisdom in the Adamic Word."[529] The title of each chapter of the *Fuṣūṣ* follows the same pattern but in each case for a different prophet or messenger. For example, the last chapter is titled: "The Ring Stone of Singularity (Non-duality) in the Muḥammadan Word." If we recall from our discussion in Chapter 5, al-Tirmidhī uses the ring *mathal* to explain the difference between the saints (*awliyāʾ*) or elite (*khawāṣṣ*) and the common (*ʿāmma*) among the Muslims. While both of these groups outwardly say the same words to remember God (*dhikr*), for al-Tirmidhī, these words come from different sources (*maʿādin*, literally 'mines') just as the ring stones of various rings differ in quality and come from different mines within the earth. In terms of al-Tirmidhī's metaphorical approach, the elite (*khāṣṣa*) and the common (*ʿāmma*) are the same 'outwardly' (*fī al-ẓāhir*) and are represented by the silver part of the ring, which is of almost equal weight among rings and is almost negligible when accounting for the actual value of the ring. Yet, 'inwardly' (*fī al-bāṭin*) there is a tremendous difference between the actual value of the rings

[528] The meaning of *faṣṣ* (pl. *fuṣūṣ*) as precious stone and not the encasing of the stone is supported by *Lane's Lexicon* (see p. 2458 under *faṣṣ*), *Lisān al-ʿArab*, *Muʿjam al-Wasīṭ*, and *Hans Wehr*.
[529] Note that my translation here differs from that of Chodkiewicz above in order to better bring out the significance of the ring *mathal*.

based in the value of their individual stones. Al-Tirmidhī uses this *mathal* to address a theological issue relating to the actual and perceived difference between believers. As we will see, Ibn ʿArabī uses the same basic structure in order to address a different but related issue, namely, the difference between the prophets/messengers and the Muḥammadan reality (*ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*). In *FH*, we have ring stones (*fuṣūṣ*) that are different for each prophet and are indicated in each chapter with a specific title, such as "the ring stone of divine wisdom" etc… Then there is the word (*kalima*) that represents the silver ring that encases the stone. In the example of the Prophet Adam the ring stone is from the 'mine' (*maʿdan*) of divine wisdom, which is set in the "ring of Adam", with the ring representing "his word". In this sense, we can read the title of the first chapter as: *Faṣṣ Ḥikma Ilāhiyya [murakkab] fī Kalimat*^{in} *Ādamiyya*, "The Ring Stone of Divine Wisdom [set] in the Adamic Word". The major commentaries on the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* do not bring out this correspondence between the word (*kalima*) and the silver ring.[530] Part of the ambiguity rests in Ibn ʿArabī's oblique style, but also, one would not necessarily understand this point without fully understanding that Ibn ʿArabī is basing his *mathal* on the ring *mathal* of al-Tirmidhī, and al-Tirmidhī is very explicit about what each part of the *mathal* represents, with the *fuṣūṣ* (ring stones) representing the qualitative nature of the saint's

[530] Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 998/1492) identifies the *faṣṣ* (pl. *fuṣūṣ*) as that which beautifies the ring and upon which the name of the owner of the ring is carved, and which he uses to stamp his seal. Jāmī identifies the *faṣṣ* and the ring band as a powerful *mathal* but does not interpret it in the same way that al-Tirmidhī does. For Jāmī the *faṣṣ* represents the non-dual (*aḥadiyyati jamʿihimā*) point of singularity that joins the two bands together just as the heart of the believer joins the opposites of necessity and possibility in the created world. ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulsī (d. 1143/1730) likens the *faṣṣ* to the Adamic body, which contains all of the possibilities of perfection. ʿAbd al-Ghanī sees the *faṣṣ* as the point of the ring and the *naqsh* (writing on the stone) to be the point of the *faṣṣ*. Hence, for ʿAbd al-Ghanī the words (*kalimāt*) are represented by the writing on the stone that is the seal. ʿAbd al-Ghanī b. Ismāʿīl al-Nābulsī, Ibn ʿArabī, and Jāmī. *Sharḥ jawāhir al-nuṣūṣ fī ḥall kalimāt al-Fuṣūṣ*. Miṣr: Maṭbaʿat al-Zamān. 1887, pp. 13–16. Ibn ʿArabī's *Kitāb Naqsh al-Fuṣūṣ*, which is a summary of his *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* does not shed light on his use of the ring *mathal*. Jāmī's commentary or the *Naqsh* states many of the same points he makes in his commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ*.

(*walī*) remembrance (*dhikr*), while the word (*kalima*) represents the vehicle that holds this remembrance, which corresponds to the silver part of the ring.

Understanding the legally valid attributes of the Sharīʿa compliant ring (*khātam sharʿī*) for men and women is important to understanding the significance of this *mathal* used by al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī. According to Islamic law men are permitted to wear a silver ring, sometimes of a specified weight while women can wear both silver and gold. Al-Tirmidhī indicates the importance of the legal ring in *NU* where he describes the legal specifications for the use of rings by men and women. The significance of the *khātam sharʿī* is that the stone that is set in the ring has no value according to the Sharīʿa because *zakāt* (alms tax) is only calculated for the value of the silver or gold part of the ring and not the value of the stone. To this effect al-Tirmidhī cites a *ḥadīth* in which Ḥafṣa, one of the wives of the Prophet, had a necklace made of precious stones worth up to thirty-thousand dirhams that she gave to the womenfolk of the Caliph ʿUmar, but she did not pay *zakāt* on it.[531] Hence, from the point of view of the Sharīʿa the only real value to the ring is the value of the metal and the stone has no particular value. On the other hand, from the point of view of the real economic value of the ring, the stone is what actually determines the value and the metal band is not the significant factor. Here we can see how the ring *mathal* functions to resolve the apparent contradiction between the equivalence of all believers as opposed to the variance in spiritual rank between those same believers. The ring thus exhibits the dual aspects of Sharīʿa (Law) and Ḥaqīqa (divine reality) that are so important in Ibn ʿArabī's thought. As we discussed in Chapter 3 the topic of belief (*imān*) and what constitutes a believer (*muʾmin*) was particularly important during the 9th-century C.E. when al-Tirmidhī was writing. For Ibn ʿArabī the more important topic was the relationship between the

[531] Ibid. *Nawādir*, pp. 129–130.

Prophet Muḥammad and the rest of the prophets. This is a topic in Ibn ʿArabī's thought that addresses the universality of Islam as well as the relationship between Islam and other religions. The flexibility of the ring *mathal* allows Ibn ʿArabī to use it as a means of commenting on issues that were more cogent in his time.[532]

Commentators on Ibn ʿArabī's *FH* have not brought out the connection between the silver/gold ring band and the word (*kalima*). Rather, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulsī (d. 1143/1730), for example, interprets the word (*kalima*) as a divine meaning or reality (*ḥaqīqa*), while Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 998/1492) interprets the word (*kalima*) as the actual person of the Prophet and his community (*umma*).[533] If we use al-Tirmidhī's structure of the ring *mathal* we will understand that the metal band of the ring represents the word (*kalima*). This connotation helps us to understand various aspects of Ibn ʿArabī's argument in the *FH*. For example, in the chapter titled, *Faṣṣ Ḥikma Aḥadiyya fī Kalima Hūdiyya,* (*The Ringstone of the Wisdom of Unicity [set] in the Word of Hūd*), Ibn ʿArabī explains a vision he had at Cordoba in 586/1190 in which he saw all of the prophets and messengers at a gathering and was spoken to personally by the Prophet Hūd.[534] In this meeting the Prophet Hūd recites the words of the Qurʾān (11:56), *mā min dābba illā huwa ākhidhun bi-nāṣiyatihā inna rabbī ʿalā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm*, "There is no creature except that he takes it by its forelock, indeed my Lord is upon a straight path." Here, Ibn ʿArabī illustrates the relationship between the Prophet Hūd and the Prophet Muḥammad. The words used by Hūd are the same as the words used by the Prophet Muḥammad because these are words found in the Qurʾān. Thus, at one level these prophets are of the same station just as the weight

[532] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 605/1209) was a contemporary of Ibn ʿArabī and went into great detail expositing the virtues of Muḥammad as the greatest of the prophets providing nineteen proofs for his preeminence. Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar. *Tafsīr al-Fakhr al-Rāzī: al-mushahhar bi-l-Tafsīr al-kabīr wa-Mafātīḥ al-ghayb.* Bayrūt: Dār al-Fikr. 1981, vol. 6, pp. 209–214.
[533] Ibid. *Sharḥ jawāhir al-nuṣūṣ*, pp. 14–16.
[534] Ibid. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, p. 110.

of the silver in the ring is the same for each ring. The meaning implied by Hūd through the recitation of this verse, however, is unique to the mine (*maʿdan*) of his heart, which is represented by his ring stone (*faṣṣ*). While the mine (*maʿdan*) of Hūd is limited to a particular area of the spiritual geography laid out by al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī, the Prophet Muḥammad, as a mercy to all of the worlds (*raḥmatan li-l-ʿālamīn*), represents the entire spiritual earth and, hence, the mine of Hūd is just one of the mines of Muḥammad. As Ibn ʿArabī then continues to say, it is the Prophet Muḥammad that completes the implication of Hūd's meaning as he recites this verse. The completion of this meaning is the Prophet's saying in a *hadīth qudsī* (God's speech revealed in the Prophet's own words) that God becomes the hearing, seeing, hand, foot and tongue of the true chosen servant (*ʿabd*). What Ibn ʿArabī indicates through this discourse between prophets is a picture of the unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) that is pieced together through his references to the continuous line of the prophets only to be completed by Muḥammad as the seal of the prophets. Through Hūd we know that the path (*ṣirāṭ*) is not just the path *of* the Lord, but that his Lord (*rabb*) *is* the path (*ṣirāṭ*) upon which the servant walks.[535] It is through Muḥammad, though, that we also know that his Lord (*rabb*) *is* the true servant, himself, who is walking.[536] If from one point of the view the Lord (*rabb*) is the path and from another point of view the Lord (*rabb*) is the one walking upon the path, then, as Ibn ʿArabī might say: Where is the servant (*ʿabd*)? As understood through a close reading of the *FH*, for Ibn ʿArabī, the term Lord (*rabb*) is a facet of God's (Allāh's) person (*dhāt*) and both *rubūbiyya* (lordship) and *ʿubūdiyya* (servanthood) are opposites that define each other. Hence, the manifestation of lordship occurs when the servant realizes his pure servanthood. This is similar to al-Tirmidhī's

[535] Ibid, p. 109.
[536] Ibid, p. 110.

concept of the *awliyāʾ* as the site of God's theophany. Ibn ʿArabī's discourse leads the reader to ask: How do you expect to find God if you are not even on the path (*ṭarīq*)?

Like al-Tirmidhī, Ibn ʿArabī uses the ring *mathal* to discuss both the sealer of saints (*khātim al-awliyāʾ*) and the sealer of prophets (*khātim al-nabiyyīn*). Ibn ʿArabī introduces another *mathal* (analogy) to support the ring *mathal* in this regard. He uses the *mathal* of the wall that is mentioned in a prophetic *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet Muḥammad describes himself as the last brick in the wall of prophecy that completes God's religion. Ibn ʿArabī adds that, in fact, there are two bricks missing in that wall. One of them is a golden brick representing the Prophet Muḥammad and the second is a silver brick representing the sealer of saints (*awliyāʾ*). These bricks come from the same mine (*maʿdan*), as represented by the entire earth rather than a particular mine as in the case of particular prophets.[537] This concept of *walāya* and its relationship to governance in particular areas of the earth was first articulated by al-Tirmidhī in his *NU*. The prophet or saint receives his spiritual knowledge in relation to the mine (*maʿdan*) that relates to the particular area of that prophet or saint's jurisdiction. This structure is mirrored closely in Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of prophethood and sainthood both in the ring and the wall analogies (*amthāl*). Al-Tirmidhī writes:

> *Wa-kullu amīrin muʾnatuhu ʿalā qadri raʿiyyatihi fa-l-amīru al-mabʿūthu ilā kawrat^{in} muḥtāj^{un} ʿalā qadri wilāyatihi ilā ālati al-wilāya min al-khadam wa-l-dawābbi wa-l-marākib wa-l-kanz li-yunfiq fī imāratihi fa-man ummira ʿalā ṭakhāristān fa-huwa aqallu haẓẓan min hādhihi al-ashyāʾ allati waṣafnā wa-man ummira ʿalā khurāsān kānat iḥtāja ilā kanzin ʿaẓīm wa-man malaka al-mashriq wa-l-maghrib wa-l-arḍa kullahā iḥtāja ilā khazāʾin al-amwāl ḥattā yaḍbiṭ bihā dhālika al-mulk fa-kadhālika kullu rasūlin buʿitha ilā qawmin uʿṭiya min kanzi al-tawḥid wa-jawāhir al-maʿrifa ʿalā qadri mā ḥamala min al-risāla fa-l-mursalu ilā qawmihi fī nāḥiyat^{in} min al-arḍ innamā yuʿṭā min al-nubuwwa min hādhihi al-kunūz ʿalā qadri mā yaqūmu bihi fī shaʾni nubuwwatihi wa-riʿayati qawmihi wa-l-mursalu ilā jamīʿi al-arḍi kāffat^{an} insihā wa-*

[537] Ibid, p. 63.

jinnihā [ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam] uʿṭiya min al-maʿrifa bi-qadri mā yaqūmu bihā fī shaʾn al-nubuwwa ilā jamīʿi ahl al-arḍ kāffat[an] fa-haẓẓuhu min qawlihi [ṣallā Allahu ʿalayhi wa-sallam] buʿithtu ilā al-aḥmar wa-l-aswad wa-min qawl Allāhi lahu wa-mā arsalnāka illā kāffat[an] li-l-nās ka-ḥaẓẓi min wilāyati malik yamliku al-dunyā sharqihā wa-gharbihā wa-mā baynahumā wa-man malaka al-arḍ kullahā wa-jawāhir al-arḍ kulliha wa-maʿadinahā lahu wa-al-malik alladhi yamliku nāḥiyat[an] min al-arḍ laysa lahu illā maʿdin nāḥiyatihi wa-jawhar dhālika al-maʿdan faqaṭ fa-lidhālika qāla rasūl Allāh ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam ukhtuṣira lī al-ḥadīth wa-ūtītu jawāmiʿa al-kalim.[538]

Every commander's supplies are commensurate with his following. The commander who is sent to a particular district needs, according to the level of his authority, the instruments of that authority, be they servants or beasts of burden or ships or treasure in order to in order to spend on his government. Whoever is given command over Ṭakhāristān, has less of a portion of these things that we have described. The one who is given command over Khurāsān [on the other hand], his need for what we have mentioned is even more. Whoever is the commander of the faithful needs a huge treasure trove and whoever is the king of the East and the West and the entire world needs the storehouses of all wealth so that he can use that dominion appropriately. Likewise every messenger who is sent to a particular people is given a portion of the treasure of *tawḥīd* (the unity of God) and the gems of gnosis commensurate with the degree of the message he carries. So, the messenger who is sent to his people in a particular place on earth is only given the degree of prophethood and treasure that is commensurate with what he must execute of the affair of his prophethood and the responsibility he has for his people. Similarly, the messenger sent to all of the people of the earth in totality, both its humans and its spirits, may God bless him and grant him peace, is given a gnosis commensurate with what he must execute concerning the affair of his prophethood as it applies to all the people of the earth. So, his portion of his saying, may God bless him and grant him peace, 'I was sent to the red and the black' and God's saying, most high, 'We did not send you except to all mankind,' is like his portion of the governance and authority of a king who owns the entire world its East and West and what is between them. Whoever owns all of the world, its gems and its mines (*maʿādin*) and likewise whoever owns a portion of the world, he only has the mine of his portion and the gem of that mine. That is why he said, may God bless him and grant him

[538] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, p. 286.

> peace, 'Speech was abbreviated for me and I was given comprehensive and all encompassing words.'

In this excerpt al-Tirmidhī draws a connection between spiritual governance and physical geography. This is picked up by Ibn ʿArabī and becomes the foundation for his doctrine of sainthood and prophethood. For both al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī the physical world is a heuristic tool for understanding the spiritual or celestial realms. This is a type of 'reading the world' through analogies (*amthāl*). For al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī, the physical world is not just a map of the celestial world, but a site of God's theophany (*tajallī*) and a key to accessing that theophany. This is not the microcosm/macrocosm dichotomy we mentioned before in Chapter 2, although this dichotomy is certainly important in the work of both al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī. Rather, the point here is that analogies (*amthāl*) are a bridge, not between the human being and the cosmos, but between the inward (*bāṭin*) and the outward (*ẓāhir*). For al-Tirmidhī, the ring stone of one person's heart may have its source (mine) at the level of the physical universe, for others it is at the level of the *malakūt* (angelic realm), and for still others it is at the level of the sovereign king (*malik al-mulk*), i.e., God himself, in his very presence (*bayna yadayhi*).[539] Hence, the heart of different individuals may be connected to different realms of the universe. The ring stones from these different mines will refract the divine light of God differently depending on their source.

Ibn ʿArabī does not simply recapitulate al-Tirmidhī's use of the ring *mathal*. Rather, he reformulates it and extends it. For al-Tirmidhī, the *faṣṣ* (ring stone) represents the heart of the saint and, as we mentioned before, al-Tirmidhī uses the ring *mathal* to talk about the difference between the ordinary believer and the saint. For Ibn ʿArabī, the ring stones become archetypes for specific modes of prophethood. These modes of prophethood are encompassed by and have

[539] Ibid. *ʿIlm al-awliyāʾ*, p. 173.

their source in the prophethood of Muḥammad, while at the same time being equally valid expressions of the divine theophany. For Ibn ʿArabī, the saints inherit (*yarithūna*) their sainthood from the mine (*maʿdan*) of a particular prophet. Ibn ʿArabī and his close students considered himself to be the sealer of Muḥammadan sainthood (*khātim al-walāya al-muḥammadīyya*) and in that sense he inherits meanings whose mine is the entire created universe, just like the Prophet Muḥammad. While the ring stones (*fuṣūṣ*) represent the archetypes of the various prophets, Ibn ʿArabī sees the saints (*awliyāʾ*) as representing the casings that enclose the stones in the different rings. These casings have different forms depending on the number of facets in the stone and its particular shape. Ibn ʿArabī explains the place of the saints in the overall scheme of the ring *mathal* in the chapter titled, The Ring Stone of the Heart [set] in the Word of Shuʿaib:

> *Fa inna al-qalb min al-ʿārif aw al-insān al-kāmil bi-manzilati maḥall faṣṣ al-khātam min al-khātam lā yafḍulu bal yakūnu ʿalā qadrihi wa shaklihi min al-istidāra in kāna al-faṣṣ mustadīr*^{an} *aw min al-tarbīʿ wa-l-tasdīs wa-l-tathmīn wa-ghayri dhālika min al-ashkāl in kāna al-faṣṣ murabbaʿan aw musaddasan aw muthaman*^{an} *aw mā kāna min al-ashkāl fa-inna maḥallahu min al-khātam yakūnu mithlahu lā ghayr*.[540]
>
> Indeed the heart of the gnostic or the perfected human being is analogous to the casing of the ring stone of the ring in relation to the ring itself. It is not wider, rather it is exactly equal to its size and shape, whether it is round if the ring stone is round, or whether it is square or hexagonal or octagonal or other than that in shape if the ring stone happens to be square-shaped or hexagonal-shaped or octagonal-shaped or whatever shape it happens to have. The casing of the ring stone in relation to the ring will always fit exactly.

We can see here how the ring *mathal* structures Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of prophethood and sainthood; however, the *mathal* itself is flexible enough to be interpreted differently by both al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī. Nevertheless, we can clearly say that this type of 'thinking through

[540] Ibid. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, p. 120.

analogies' is inspired by al-Tirmidhī and wholeheartedly adopted by Ibn ʿArabī as an alternative to speculative theology (Kalām) and philosophy (Falsafa).

Ibn ʿArabī's Doctrine of Sainthood

Chodkiewicz summarizes Ibn ʿArabī's hagiology, or doctrine of *walāya*, as revolving around three fundamental notions: *wirātha* (inheritance),[541] *niyāba* (the substitution of the *walī* in a role that ultimately belongs to the Muḥammadan reality) and *qurba* (proximity).[542] Our discussion, thus far, about the relationship between al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī and their use of the ring *mathal* to structure their doctrines of *walāya*, forces us to look anew at Chodkiewicz' summary of Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya*. The ring *mathal* is an analogy that describes how God's theophany (*tajallī*) appears in the world. The silver or gold band represents the words of the divine remembrance (*dhikr*) and these words hold the ring stone that is set in the ring. The ring stone comes from different sources (mines), the stones of which carry different values. The ring stone represents the heart of the *walī* according to al-Tirmidhī and the heart of the prophet/messenger, according to Ibn ʿArabī. Thus, when the *walī* or prophet/messenger speaks, the divine meaning, which corresponds to the mine (*maʿdan*) that his heart is connected to in the unseen world (*ghayb*), then becomes manifest in the seen world (*al-ʿālam al-ẓāhir*). Thus, it is the heart of the *walī*/prophet/messenger that represents the conduit by which God's divine light (*nūr*) shines into the world. If we understand that this structure is shared by both al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī we should venture to say that theophany (*tajallī*) is probably the most important aspect of Ibn ʿArabī's hagiology. While *wirātha* (spiritual heritage) and *niyāba* (substitution) definitely play defining roles in that hagiology, we would dispute the extent to which *qurba* (nearness) plays an important role. For Ibn ʿArabī nearness (*qurba*) and distance (*buʿd*) are

[541] Chodkiewicz translates this term as "the heritage of a spiritual knowledge."
[542] Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, p. 147.

relative qualities with respect to the saint (*walī*). For example, one of the reasons given by Ibn ʿArabī for the gathering of prophets at Cordoba mentioned earlier, was to intercede with the Prophet Muḥammad on behalf of al-Ḥusayn b. Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj who had been insolent about him.[543] For Ibn ʿArabī *qurb* (nearness) itself can be a veil to the manifestation of God.[544] As we discussed generally about Islamic sainthood, nearness (*qurba*) is one aspect of sainthood in the Islamic tradition but not its defining point.

Instead of *qurb* (nearness), a more defining element of *walāya* for Ibn ʿArabī is knowledge (*ʿilm*). For example, Ibn ʿArabī states in his *Futūḥāt al-Makiyya* (*Meccan Revelations*) that God never takes an ignorant person to be his saint (*walī*).[545] For Ibn ʿArabī, though, a *walī* has knowledge of *tawḥīd* (God's oneness). *Tawḥīd* is different from *shahada* (the witnessing of faith in Islam). Ibn ʿArabī sees *tawḥīd* as more general than the *shahada* because *tawḥīd* is understood "from any perspective" (*bi-ayyi wajhin kān*). Ibn ʿArabī is ambivilant about whether or not this is restricted to Islam.[546] This is very different than al-Tirmidhī's understanding of the *muwaḥḥid*, who is strictly someone who testifies to God's oneness through the testification of faith.[547] While al-Tirmidhī extends the possibility of *walāya* to all Muslims, Ibn ʿArabī extends the possibility of *walāya* to all of humanity.[548]

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[543] Ibid, p. 132.
[544] Ibid. *Khatm al-awliyāʾ*, p. 269.
[545] Ibid, p. 166.
[546] Ibid, pp. 166–167. Ibn ʿArabī first says that the *muwaḥḥid* is one who expresses *tawḥīd* through any means, however, he then begins a discussion about how the testification of faith as mentioned in the Qurʾān is protected by God's testifying to his own oneness before and after the testification lest any damned person (*shaqī*) have access to it. This could be interpreted to mean that no *muwaḥḥid* will be damned to Hell. On the other hand it could mean that *tawḥīd* is simply the belief in the heart and not the outward testification of faith. This would make sense with Ibn ʿArabī's approach to the status of Pharaoh, who he counts among those who will not ultimately be among the damned (*ashqiyāʾ*) because of his act of faith uttered *in extremis*. Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, p. 161. Pharaoh's testification of faith is not considered a willful act because it was made at the point of death as if under duress. Furthermore, Pharaoh testifies to belief in the God of the Israelites and does not mention the formal testification which mentions God's name.
[547] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 6, p. 141.
[548] Ibid. *Thalāthat muṣannafāt*, p. 141.

Al-Tirmidhī made an important claim when he stated that the *awliyāʾ* were the true *khulafāʾ* (successors of the Prophet). For al-Tirmidhī, this *khilāfa* (vicegerency) is not the *khilāfa* extended to Adam upon his descent to earth and through which human beings are distinguished from other creatures in God's creation. As we mentioned in Chapters 1 and 4, al-Tirmidhī sees the *awliyāʾ* as the real and rightful religious authorities of the Muslim community (*umma*). Ibn ʿArabī also discusses *khilāfa* but uses it in the other sense to mean the special status of human beings in the world.[549] From this point of view Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya* seems less powerful than al-Tirmidhī's, because its social and political implications are less. As we mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* served to sanctify the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*) even while it was a strong critique of this class. This was because al-Tirmidhī did not establish any clear external criteria for identifying the *awliyāʾ*. Rather, al-Tirmidhī considered knowledge of the Sharīʿa [defined by al-Tirmidhī as the knowledge of the *halāl* (permissible) and the *ḥarām* (impermissible)] to be the entry point for the higher levels of *walāya*. Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *walāya*, on the other hand, appears to undermine the power and authority of the scholarly class (*ʿulamāʾ*) to the benefit of the Ṣūfī *shaykh* by establishing the latter as an independent authority without needing the qualification of Sharīʿa knowledge.[550] Al-Tirmidhī seeks to reform and empower the scholarly class, while Ibn ʿArabī disempowers the scholarly class and empowers the Ṣūfī *shaykh* as an independent actor. However, for both al-

[549] Ibn ʿArabī sees vicegerency in a more abstract sense of being the reason that God preserves his creation. The *khalīfa* (successor) can only be a perfected human being (*al-insān al-kāmil*). Sometimes this individual may coincide with outward authority or may not, however, the principal of *khilāfa* (successorship or vicegerency) does not necessarily imply outward authority for Ibn ʿArabī. Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, p. 70.

[550] A testament to this are the *awliyā* (saints) highlighted in his work *Sufis of Andalusia*, who clearly are not from the *ʿulamāʾ* class. It seems that sainthood in the western lands of Islamdom more often generate this type of saint and Ibn ʿArabī was from Islamic Spain. This is idea is supported by the work of Vincent Cornell in his book *Realm of the Saint*.

Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī the discussion around *walāya* is a discussion about authority and prophecy.

A Continuation of al-Tirmidhī's Non-dual Metaphysics

We discussed in Chapter 2 how al-Tirmidhī posits a cosmos composed of duals as a way of framing God's non-duality. If by God's oneness we mean that God is the only true singularity, then God is not just 'one' like other objects but a unique type of oneness that has no opposite. The term al-Tirmidhī uses for this is *fardāniyya* (singularity or non-duality). This term denotes the idea of being alone and without opposite.[551] For al-Tirmidhī, certain traces of God's theophany (*tajallī*) must exist in the world in order for the world to continue its existence. The highest group of the *awliyāʾ* are seen as traces (*āthār*) of God in the world and they attain the station (*manzil*) of *fardānīyya*, that is, they take on certain qualities that are non-dual in nature. It is in this way that al-Tirmidhī considers the *awliyāʾ* to be a *ḥujja* (standard) for the people who live in their time because the *awliyāʾ* are the point of reference by which the actions of those people will be judged. This is similar to how the Qurʾān presents the Prophet Muḥammad as a witness or *ḥujja* (standard) for all of mankind. This dualistic cosmology and non-dual theology forms the backdrop to the thought of al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī. We have already provided some examples of al-Tirmidhī's non-dual theology in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5. However, in order to demonstrate the interconnected nature of the thought of both al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī, we will show how Ibn ʿArabī builds upon a foundation provided by al-Tirmidhī. In *NU* al-Tirmidhī explains how the highest of the *awliyāʾ* not only pass beyond the world of opposites but

[551] The word *fard* is implicitly tied to the concept of duality. According to Ibn Manẓūr in his *Lisān al-ʿArab* the word *fard* indicates one of a pair. However, since God has no pair he is one without a pair while all other created things have pairs in the Qurʾānic cosmology. Ibid. *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 2, p. 292. Al-Tirmidhī takes this word and creates a *nisba* adjective *fardānī* from which the abstract noun is derived *fardānīyya*.

beyond God's attributes that are connected to dualities in the world such as his beauty and majesty:

> *Fa idhā kāna qalbuhu ʿindahu fī mulk al-jamāl fa-l-ghālib ʿalayhi al-uns wa-jazāʾ al-uns wa-idhā kāna qalbuhu ʿindahu mulk al-jalāl fa-l-ghālib ʿalayhi al-hayba wa-jazāʾ al-hayba minhu al-yawm al-amn ghad^{an} wa jazāʾ al-uns bihi al-yawm al-aml ghad^{an}. Wa ṣinf^{un} min al-awliyāʾ aʿlā min hādhayn al-ṣinfayn wa-hum al-muḥaddathūna qad qarabū min maḥall al-anbiyāʾ fa-qulūbuhum ʿindahu fī mulk mulkihi qad jāwazat mulk al-jalāl wa-l-jamāl ilā fardāniyyatihi fa-infardū bihi fī waḥdaniyyatihi .*[552]
>
> So if his heart is with him (God) in the dominion of beauty (*jamāl*) then the preponderance of his state is intimacy with him (God) and the recompense for intimacy is hope [for what his fate will be] after that. [On the other hand] whoever's heart is with him (God) in the dominion of majesty (*jalāl*) the preponderance of his state is awe and the recompense for awe of him (God) is security after that and the recompense for intimacy with him on that Day is hope after that. A group of the saints is higher than these two groups and they are the ones spoken to by God. They have come nigh to the station of the prophets because their hearts are with him in the dominion of his dominion. [Their hearts] have surpassed the dominion of beauty and the majesty to reach absolute aloneness and so they have become solitaries through him in his oneness.

In this passage we can see how many of the elements of al-Tirmidhī's non-dual theology come together. There is the basic idea that human hearts are connected to different realms represented by mines (*maʿādin*) within the earth. Although al-Tirmidhī doesn't mention mines (*maʿādin*) in this passage, we discussed earlier how, for al-Tirmidhī, mines in the earth connect to realms in the *ghayb* (unseen). The human soul was created from the top layer of the earth's "dust" (*turāb*) that was tread upon by Satan while the human heart was created from a particular clay (*ṭīna*) deep within the earth and thus, the heart is the faculty by which the human being perceives God.[553] When God kneaded the primordial clay with his hands he mixed it with water and then

[552] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 3, p. 410.
[553] Ibid. *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidī et le néoplatonisme de son temps*, p. 28.

let it rise. From that primordial "dough" he first created Adam and then from Adam generated all of the human race.[554] Thus, human beings have a portion of that dust (*turāb*) representing the lower soul, but have a heart made from different types of clay (*ṭīn*) within the earth. Since each heart is molded from a different part of the primordial clay, each heart has a different ability to perceive God's light. Some will perceive God's creation, others, his attributes, while still others will go beyond the attributes to be in the presence or dominion of his dominion (*mulk mulkihi*). Since the world, according to al-Tirmidhī, is a place composed of opposites (*aḍdād*), some of the attributes of God will reflect that duality, while other saints will be closer to God's non-duality such as the first Caliph Abū Bakr who is characterized by God's mercy (*raḥma*).[555] From this we can see that the heart that draws nearer to God draws closer to his non-duality and is characterized by that non-duality, becoming a trace of God in the world. For al-Tirmidhī, the Prophet Muḥammad epitomizes this non-dual station (*fardāniyya*) and he explains it in a story related about the Prophet in the Ḥadīth literature. This *ḥadīth* was narrated by ʿAbdallāh b. Burayda through his father: The Prophet Muḥammad left Madīna to go on a military expedition, but instead, returned without going. He was then visited by a black slave girl who told him that she had sworn an oath that she would play a drum for him if he returned safely from his expedition. The Prophet replied that if she had really sworn an oath she could go ahead and play the drum, but if not, that she should not. While she was playing the drum Abū Bakr entered and she continued playing, but when ʿUmar came in she stopped and sat on the drum out of fear of him. The Prophet turned to ʿUmar and said that the devil himself was afraid of ʿUmar.[556] Al-

[554] Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 6, p. 218.
[555] Ibid, vol. 2, p. 24. Abū Bakr, the first of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and father-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad is considered by al-Tirmidhī to be one of the foremost of the saints and is characterized by *raḥma* (mercy). God's mercy attaches to every created thing and is thus more indicative of God's non-duality than his beauty (*jamāl*) or majesty (*jalāl*). Al-Tirmidhī contrasts this to the second Caliph ʿUmar who he characterizes as being at the level of rightness (*ḥaqq*), which is a level below that of Abū Bakr, who is closer to God's non-duality. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 24.
[556] Ibid, pp. 58–59.

Tirmdhī tells us that we should not think that ʿUmar is better than the Prophet or Abū Bakr; rather, as we stated in Chapter 2, ʿUmar is an example of one of the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) who are able to distinguish between truth and falsehood. However, the Prophet and Abū Bakr (who among Sunnī believers is most like the Prophet Muḥammad) are at a yet higher level, which is the station of *fardāniyya*. That is, they are at the level of witnessing God's divine theophany in the moment. They are not veiled by the opposites of truth and falsehood. Rather, they are the standard by which truth and falsehood are judged. For ʿUmar, a woman playing an instrument in front of men is reprehensible because it can lead to immorality. However, this applies an abstract moral judgment and assumes that a woman playing an instrument in front of men necessarily leads to immorality. The Prophet accedes to the fact that there is a possibility for immorality to occur because he mentions that the devil was present, but he does not judge abstractly where the limit between morality and immorality occurs. Rather, the Prophet, himself, is the conduit for God's own judgment. Since the Prophet did not receive a revelation from God telling him otherwise, he allowed the girl to play the drum. The fact that al-Tirmidhī believes that there are saints like Abū Bakr in the station of *fardāniyya* (non-duality) who will exist after the Prophet and who will continue to exist in the world until the Final Judgment, brings up the controversial issue of antinomianism. This is the charge that critics of Sufism, like Ibn Taymiyya, have used to attack the Ṣūfī doctrine of saints. On the flip side, however, al-Tirmidhī's doctrine gives Muslim saints the authority to adapt and tailor the Sharīʿa to new people, places and situations. Historically this has lent Sufism a dynamism that has only slowed in the modern period with the advent of Salafism and Wahhabism. For al-Tirmidhī, prophecy does not completely stop with the death of the Prophet but continues in a limited sense through the saints. As we will see, this is a doctrine that is also supported by Ibn ʿArabī.

Ibn ʿArabī takes al-Tirmidhī's non-dual theology a step further. For Ibn ʿArabī, the world is not composed of opposites because the entire world is the site of God's theophany (*tajallī*). Rather, it is in the imaginal realm (*ʿālam al-khayāl*) that opposites actually exist. The following quote summarizes Ibn ʿArabī's approach:

> *Fa anta ʿabdun wa-anta rabb*^{un}
> *li-man lahu fīhi anta ʿabd*^{un}
> *Wa anta rabb*^{un} *wa anta ʿabd*^{un}
> *li-man lahu fī al-khiṭāb ʿahd*^{un}
> *Fa-kullu ʿaqd*^{in} *ʿalayhi shakhṣ*^{un}
> *yaḥilluhu man siwāhu ʿaqd*^{un}
>
> *Fa-radiya Allāhu ʿan ʿabīdihi fa-hum marḍiyyūn wa raḍū ʿanhu fa-huwa marḍiyy*^{un} *fa-taqābalat al-haḍratān taqābul al-amthāl wa-al-amthāl aḍdād li-anna al-mathalayn lā yajtamiʿān idh lā yatamayyizān wa-mā thamma illā mutamayyiz fa-mā thamma mathal*^{un} *fa-mā fī al-wujūdi mathal fa-mā fī al-wujūdi ḍidd*^{un} *fa-inna al-wujūd ḥaqīqa wāḥida wa-l-shayʾ lā yuḍād nafsahu.*
>
> *Fa lam yabqā illā al-ḥaqq lam yabqā kāʾin*
> *fa-mā thamma mawṣūlun wa-mā thamma bāʾin*
> *Bi-dhā jāʾa burhānu al-ʿiyān fa-mā arā*
> *bi-ʿaynī illā ʿaynahu idh uʿāyan*[557]
>
> You are servant and you are Lord
> For One for Whom and in Whom you are servant
> You are Lord and you are servant
> For One who has knowledge of the divine address
> Every relationship one is upon
> Any other relationship will unbind
>
> God is pleased with His servants and so they are well pleasing, and they are pleased with Him and so He is pleasing. Thus the two planes (servant and Lord) are contrasted like analogies (*amthāl*) and analogies are [composed of] opposites, since two analogies will never join, otherwise there would be no distinction. There is [in fact] only One who is distinct and there is no analogy. In [true] existence there is no analogy and there is no opposite, for existence is but One Reality, and a thing is not the opposite of itself.
>
> Nothing remains other than the Reality, no being

[557] Ibid. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, pp. 92–93.

There is no arriving and no being afar
Spiritual vision confirms this, for I
Have not seen aught but Him, when I was shown.[558]

For Ibn ʿArabī only God has existence (*wujūd*) and all other things in the world are merely reflections of aspects of his reality. When taken as a whole, all of the created world reflects God's *dhāt* (essence) in his entirety, although it is only accessible to him and not to any created thing. In a sense, Ibn ʿArabī flips al-Tirmidhī's paradigm. God has no opposite just as al-Tirmidhī says, but instead of the opposites in creation framing God's non-duality, it is God's non-duality and its reflection in all created things that gives meaning to the dualities (*amthāl*) in the imaginal realm. In other words, analogies (*amthāl*) are not intrinsic to the world, but are a means for human beings to understand and make sense of their original reality since they are only reflections of aspects of God's single reality. This is how the *amthāl* (analogies) provide a way of 'thinking' about God and the world. This is why, for Ibn ʿArabī, every outward act of religious devotion in any religion, monotheistic or polytheistic can be seen as an object of God's worship and an expression of God's lordship.[559]

The relationship between the thought of Ibn ʿArabī and the thought of al-Tirmidhī is extensive and subtle. We discussed earlier how al-Tirmidhī uses the term *mulk mulkihi* (the dominion of his dominion) to indicate the non-dual station of *walāya* reserved for the highest of the *awliyāʾ*. In his *FH* Ibn ʿArabī cites al-Tirmidhī by name as mentioning this station/name since the vowel markings on these two words can be switched to read either *mulk al-malik* (the dominion of the king) or *malik al-mulk* (the king of the dominion).[560] However, since the vowel

[558] In the translation of these lines we made use of R. W. J. Austin's translation of the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, however, we modified this translation because of what we consider to be some inaccuracies based on a misunderstanding of the significance of the word *mathal* (analogy). Muḥyī al-Dīn b. ʿArabī. *The bezels of wisdom*. Ed. R. W. J. Austin New York: Paulist Press. 1980, p. 108.
[559] Ibid. *Seal of the saints*, p. 40.
[560] Ibid. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, p. 71. ʿAfīfī writes *mālik al-mulk* in the text, however he indicates in the footnotes that one of the manuscripts actually witnesses the correct version which is *mulk al-malik*. We know that the reading must be

markings are not written in the texts that we are dealing with, there is an ambiguity as to which of these two readings is meant. The only way to distinguish is through context. Al-Tirmidhī clearly meant the first of the two readings, *mulk mulkihi* (the dominion of the king, which corresponds to *mulk al-malik* in Ibn ʿArabī) since he was contrasting the dominion (*mulk*) of the king himself to the dominion (*mulk*) of the attributes of the king. For Ibn ʿArabī, this type of ambiguity speaks directly to his thesis that only God really has existence (*wujūd*). In this scheme our human consciousness is only a factor of our distance from God, but seen from another perspective, that consciousness is also an aspect of God's self-consciousness, which for Ibn ʿArabī, is the only consciousness that truly exists. In the *Futūḥāt al-Makiyya* Ibn ʿArabī plays with the vowel markings of the two phrases *mulk al-malik* (dominion of the king) and *malik al-mulk* (king of the dominion) to demonstrate his point that, depending on the perspective, one can say that both the king (*malik*) and the dominion (*mulk*) are in one sense the same, while in another sense, not the same.[561] He then uses a participial form for king/owner (*malīk*) from the root *m-l-k* also found in the Qurʾān to bolster his argument. The form is the *faʿīl* pattern that can have the meaning of both the doer (*fāʿil*) of an action as well as the object (*mafʿūl*) of that action. Hence, the word *malīk* can mean both 'owner' or 'thing owned.' For Ibn ʿArabī, if God himself is non-dual, then the entirety of creation that is a reflection of him as his trace (*athar*) must also be non-dual. Again, we can see here how Ibn ʿArabī takes motifs, concepts and words from al-Tirmidhī and builds upon them to construct a unique and sophisticated theosophy. In general, the problem that we are faced with in studies of Ibn ʿArabī's works is that Ibn ʿArabī's debt to al-Tirmidhī is not sufficiently appreciated. This has led to a misunderstanding of some of Ibn

mulk al-malik (the dominion of the king) or *malik al-mulk* (the king of the dominion) because Ibn ʿArabī cites al-Tirmidhī's use of this term by name and al-Tirmidhī consistently uses the term *mulk al-malik*.

[561] Ibid. *Khatm al-awliyāʾ*, p. 164.

ʿArabī's major ideas that can only be fully understood through an analysis of his discourse stream involving al-Tirmidhī.

Ḥikma and *Walāya* according to the Early Shādhiliyya

The Shādhiliyya is one of the important and influential *ṭuruq* (Ṣūfī brotherhoods) still in operation today in much of the Muslim world. It takes its inspiration from Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. 656/1258), a Moroccan saint of the 13th-century C.E. who traveled throughout North Africa but had his greatest success in Egypt.[562] Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī may not have intended to pioneer a successful and far-reaching brotherhood, however, the enthusiasm of his followers as well as the emergence of a number of highly gifted successors catapulted the *ṭarīqa* to prominence. The commonly held belief among the followers of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī was that he was the *quṭb* (the spiritual pole) of his time and this gave them a sense of distinction and importance, not only for Islam, but for the world. A saying attributed to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī indicates that he was granted a request by God that the *quṭb* (spiritual pole) would be maintained in the spiritual lineage (*shajara*) of the Shādhilī Ṭarīqa (brotherhood) until the end of time. This *ṭarīqa*, as well as others like it, became a living embodiment of the spiritual hierarchy and government Ibn ʿArabī and al-Tirmidhī both espoused in their doctrines of *walāya*. Above and beyond this, it is the Shādhilī *ṭarīqa* that developed al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* (wisdom) as discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

[562] P. Lory. "al-Shādhilī." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 07 March 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-s-h-a-d-h-ili-SIM_6735>

The connection between al-Tirmidhī's thought and the works of the main progenitors of the Shādhilī *ṭarīqa* has already been established by Richard McGregor.[563] It is clear that both al-Shādhilī and his close students read *SA* (also known as *Khatm al-Awliyāʾ*) by al-Tirmidhī. However, MacGregor does not highlight the degree to which al-Tirmidhī's concepts of *walāya* (sainthood) and *ḥikma* (wisdom) became integral to the thought of the early Shādhiliyya. While Ibn ʿArabī was fascinated by al-Tirmidhī's discussion of non-duality and *khatm al-walāya* (the seal of sainthood), the Shādhilīyya were more concerned with the practical aspects of *ḥikma* (wisdom) and *walāya* (sainthood).[564] It is not until Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh (d. 709/1309)[565] that al-Tirmidhī's doctrine is clearly synthesized with the main tenets of the *ṭarīqa* (spiritual path) established by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī. However, even with al-Shādhilī himself, we can see elements of al-Tirmidhī's influence. In his *Ḥizb al-Kabīr* (also known as *Ḥizb al-Barr*) or *The Great Litany,* al-Shādhilī asks God to give him the *ḥikmat al-ḥikma* (the wisdom of wisdom).[566] This is most probably a reference to al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's *ḥikmat al-ḥikma* (the wisdom of wisdom), which represents the *ḥikma* (wisdom) of the *awliyāʾ* and is a wisdom higher than the wisdom of the *ḥukamāʾ* (sages).

The foremost spokesman for the teachings of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī was undoubtedly Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh.[567] In his work *Laṭāʾif al-Minan fī Manāqib al-Shaykh Abī al-*

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[563] Richard J. A. McGregor. *Sanctity and mysticism in medieval Egypt the Wafāʾ Sufi order and the legacy of Ibn ʿArabī.* Albany: State University of New York Press. 2004, p. 30.

[564] This is not to discount the claims, for example, of Muḥammad Wafāʾ that he was the seal of saints. Ibid. *Sanctity and mysticism*, p. 57. The general trend, however, among Shādhilīs was a more practical *ḥikma* (wisdom) oriented approach to Ṣūfī discourse.

[565] Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh was a student of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī (d. 686/1287) who was a student of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī.

[566] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Qaṣrī, Muḥammad ʿAṭīya Khamīs, ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Shādhilī, and Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAṭāʾ Allāh. *Sharḥ ḥizb al-barr*. Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth. 2002, p. 116.

[567] George Makdisi. "Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh". Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. University Of Michigan-Ann Arbor. 08 March 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ibn-at-a-alla-h-SIM_3092>

ʿAbbās al-Mursī wa-Shaykhihi Abī al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (*The Precious Gifts concerning the Virtues of Shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī and his Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī*) Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh begins with a discussion on *walāya* (sainthood) that draws heavily from al-Tirmidhī's works. His introduction on *walāya* serves to identify Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī (d. 686/1287) and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī as exemplars of *walāya* (sainthood). In a sense, he is casting these two Ṣūfī masters as living proof of al-Tirmidhī's claims about *walāya*.

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh quotes five *aḥādīth* (pl. of *ḥadīth*) from al-Tirmidhī and provides two direct quotes from him about *walāya* and *maʿrifa* (gnosis). In the introduction of Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh's work on *walāya*, only al-Tirmidhī is quoted directly by name as an authority among the citations of the narrators of Ḥadīth and the *mashāyikh* (Ṣūfī masters) of the Shādhilī *silsila* (initiatic chain).[568] Also, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh's own commentary on *walāya* closely resembles the structure of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh describes the *awliyāʾ* as *ḥummāl asrārihi wa-maʿādin anwārihi*, "the bearers of his (God's) secrets and the mines (*maʿādin*) of his (God's) lights."[569] We already discussed how the mine (*maʿdan*) is a central image in al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh also communicates a central tenet of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine, which is that prophethood (*nubuwwa*) continues through the *awliyāʾ*. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh distinguishes clearly between *awliyāʾ* (saints) and *anbiyāʾ* (prophets), but indicates that the knowledge through God (*al-ʿilm bi-llāh*) of the *awliyāʾ* is what maintains the light of prophecy in the world.[570] In fact, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh calls the *awliyāʾ* "*āyāt Allāh*" (the verses/signs of God) and interprets the word *āya* (pl. *āyāt*) in several Qurʾānic verses (*āyāt*) as referring to the *awliyāʾ*.[571]

[568] Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAṭāʾ Allāh,. *Laṭāʾif al-minan fī manāqib al-shaykh Abī al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī wa-shaykhihi al-shaykh Abī al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī*. Cairo: Maktaba al-Qāhira. 2004, pp. 17–18.
[569] Ibid, p. 19.
[570] Ibid, p. 16.
[571] Ibid, p. 16.

This is significant because the word *āya* also means a verse of the Qurʾān, which is considered to be God's speech and an attribute (*ṣifa*) of God. For al-Tirmidhī, the *awliyāʾ* are considered to be one of four of God's traces (*āthār*) on earth including God's speech in the form of the Qurʾān. We discussed how al-Tirmidhī sees the highest of the *awliyāʾ* as those who are *al-dalāl ʿalā Allāh*, that is, they indicate God through their very selves. This is the same point that Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh is making when he says the *awliyāʾ* are *āyāt* Allāh (the signs/verses of God).

Another important point of convergence between Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh and al-Tirmidhī is in the concept that *walāya* is not connected to time. We discussed this point of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine in detail in Chapter 5. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh writes:

> *waʿlam jaʿalaka Allāhu min khāṣṣati ʿibādihi wa-ʿarrafaka laṭāʾifa widādihi annahu sawāʾā minhum al-ẓāhir wa-l-khafī wa al-ṣiddīq wa-l-walī fasād al-waqt lā yakdiru anwārahum wa-lā yaḥuṭṭu miqdārahum li-annahum maʿa al-muʾaqqit lā maʿa al-awqāt fa-man kāna maʿa al-muʾaqqit lā yataghayyiru bi-taghyīr al-waqt shayʾan wa man maʿa al-waqt taghayyara bi-taghyīrihi wa-takaddara bi-takaddurihi*.[572]
>
> Know, may God make you among his elite servants and acquaint you with the subtleties of his tender love, that for all of these: the manifest saint and the hidden saint and the most truthful saint and any saint in general, the corruption of the time he lives in will not sully his lights nor will it lower his degree because these (saints) are with the Timekeeper not with times. So, whoever is with the Timekeeper does not change at all with the changing of times, but whoever is with the time he lives in, changes with its changing and becomes sullied with its muddiness.

This approach shares in the optimism expressed by al-Tirmidhī that there will always be guidance in the world in the form of human beings who carry on the prophetic legacy of the Prophet Muḥammad until the end of the world. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh quotes several prophetic *aḥādīth* (pl. of *ḥadīth*) also narrated by al-Tirmidhī to this effect, such as, *ummatī ka-l-maṭari lā yudrā*

[572] Ibid, pp. 17–18.

awwaluhu khayrun am ākhiruhu, "My community is like the rain in that one does not know if its first part is best or its last."[573] Not only will there always be *awliyāʾ* in the community of the Prophet Muḥammad till the end of time, but when darkness and ignorance prevails, the lights of their guidance will shine even stronger.[574] This is exactly what al-Tirmidhī's doctrine expressed: that opposites must always be in balance in the world, meaning that guidance must always be present wherever there is ignorance and confusion.

In Chapter 3 we discussed al-Tirmidhī's distinction between *awliyāʾ Allāh ḥaqqan* (the true saints of God) and *awliyāʾ ḥaqq Allāh* (the saints who observe the right(s) of God). Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh provides the same division under a variety of names indicating that he is not so much concerned with the naming convention as he is with the underlying distinction. He calls it *al-walāya al-ṣughrā* (the lesser sainthood) and *al-walāya al-kubrā* (the greater sainthood).[575] He provides a list of six different names that could be applied to this basic division. For example, he says we could also call it *walāyat al-īmān* (the sainthood of belief) and *walāyat al-īqān* (the sainthood of certainty).[576] This is exactly the distinction that al-Tirmidhī makes between those who are *awliyāʾ* by virtue of their belief in God and their deeds, as opposed to those who have attained *walāya* based on God's choosing them to be his intimate interlocutors (*muḥaddathūn*). These *awliyāʾ* have achieved certainty (*yaqīn*) through their direct experiencing of God. This is the basic distinction that al-Tirmidhī lays out in his book *SA*, a book Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh claims he read.

Finally, we talked about how al-Tirmidhī criticizes asceticism for its dependence on acts of worship and mortification of the flesh to produce spiritual states. This is part of al-

[573] Ibid, p. 17.
[574] Ibid, p. 18.
[575] Ibid, p. 25.
[576] Ibid, p. 25.

Tirmidhī's radical interiorization of the ascetic/mystical path. As we mentioned in Chapter 4, al-Tirmidhī feels that the novice (*murīd*) should only perform ordinary acts of worship outwardly, but focus on disciplining the soul inwardly in order to progress toward a purer spiritual state by examining its attachments to things in the world. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh also follows al-Tirmidhī on this point by criticizing the *ʿubbād* (worshippers) and the *zuhhād* (ascetics) for being overly obsessed with practicing and incorporating the means to reaching God without actually reaching him. In this passage Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh also demonstrates his debt to Ibn ʿArabī as well as al-Tirmidhī:

> *Fa-l-nāẓir li-l-kāʾināt ghayr shāhid li-l-ḥaqqi fīha ghāfil wa-l-fānī ʿanhā ʿabd*[un] *bi-sawṭāt al-shuhūd dhāhil wa-l-shahīd li-l-ḥaqqi fīhā ʿabd*[un] *mukhaṣṣaṣ kāmil wa-innamā tarfaʿu al-himma ʿan al-kawni min ḥaythu kawniyyatihi lā min ḥaythu ẓuhūr al-ḥaqqi fīhi fa-aʿḍāʾ al-zuhhād wa-l-ʿubbād wa-ahl al-irāda ʿan al-kawn liannahum lam yasbiq ẓuhūr al-ḥaqqi fīhi wa-dhālika li-ʿadami nufūdhihim ilayhi fī kulli shayʾ lā li-ʿadami ẓuhūrihi fī kulli shayʾ fa-innahu ẓāhir*[un] *fī kull shayʾ ḥattā annahu ẓāhir*[un] *fī-mā bihi iḥtajaba fa-lā ḥijāb*.[577]
>
> The one who gazes (with his heart) at existent things cannot witness the Real through those things and in them he is heedless. The one who is annihilated from them (existent things) is a slave absorbed by the lashings of direct witnessing. The one who witnesses the Real through existent things is a chosen and perfected slave. Aspirations only rise above the created world because of the true reality of the world, not because of God's (*al-ḥaqq*) manifesting in it. Hence, [we have] groups of the ascetics (*zuhhād*) and the worshippers (*ʿubbād*) and those who want to go beyond this world because for them the manifestation of the Real has not yet occurred and that is because they do not find him in every single thing, not because he (God) is not manifest in everything for he (God) is in fact manifest in every single thing to the extent that he (God) is manifest in that through which he is veiled, so in truth, there isn't even a veil.

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh blends motifs from al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī seamlessly. The criticism of *zuhhād* (ascetics) and *ʿubbād* (worshippers) is something mirrored directly in al-Tirmidhī's

[577] Ibid, p. 28.

works.[578] However, the argument is cast in a way that reflects elements of Ibn ʿArabī's *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of existence). Al-Tirmidhī talks about the veil (*ḥijāb*) and the lifting of the veil, but does not address the idea that God's outward manifestation is so great that there isn't actually a veil to begin with. Ibn ʿArabī, on the other hand, does not focus his criticism on ascetics (*zuhhād*) and worshippers (*ʿubbād*).

The *Ḥikma* of the Shādhilīyya

We have shown how the early progenitors of the Shādhilī brotherhood incorporated important elements of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya*, although it is significant to note that they were more interested in defining *ḥikma* as a means of articulating a method for navigating the spiritual path. We find this approach masterfully described in Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh's *al-Ḥikam* (*The Aphorisms*). It is a collection of two hundred and sixty-four pithy maxims that summarize the Ṣūfī *ṭarīq* (path) to God. Numerous commentaries have been written on *al-Ḥikam* by Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh and it is considered a pivotal work not only by Shādhilīs, but by many other Ṣūfī *ṭuruq* (brotherhoods).[579] While there are no direct references in *al-Ḥikam* to al-Tirmidhī or his works, the structure of *al-Ḥikam* appears to take its inspiration from al-Tirmidhī's approach to *ḥikma* (wisdom).

As we discussed in Chapter 2, *ḥikma* deals with understanding the world of opposites (*aḍdād*) as a way of coming to know God. This is different than the gifted knowledge (*maʿrifa*) of the *awliyāʾ* that comes directly from God to the servant. *Ḥikma* is useful because it is based on experience and reflects the cumulative knowledge of mystics who have tread the path (*ṭarīq*) to God. This is why al-Tirmidhī states in *NU, lā ḥakīm illā dhū tajriba*, "A sage is only someone

[578] Ibid. *Concept*, p. 152.
[579] Ibid. *Islamic mysticism*, p. 213.

who possesses experience, i.e., of treading the path to God." Therefore, his experience is useful and it reflects the challenges and difficulties that lie upon that path. This is again why in *KH* al-Tirmidhī likens the *ḥakīm* (sage) to one who knows the dangerous parts of the wilderness and avoids these dangers as a he passes through. The *walī*, on the other hand, gives no heed to these dangers because the wild beasts pay homage to him.[580]

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh's *al-Ḥikam* follows in the tradition of books of Ṣūfī aphorisms. Abū Madyan (d. 594/1197), the spiritual ancestor of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī, has a book of aphorisms. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī himself is credited with a *waṣiyya* (literally a last testament) of aphorisms. Neither of these previous works found the wide appeal and acceptance that was given to *al-Ḥikam*.[581] Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh not only drew inspiration from these two examples of the *ḥikma* genre in Sufism, but also incorporated much of the received knowledge of Ṣūfī literature prior to him in his book of maxims. Most of the maxims revolve around a set of opposites (*aḍdād*) that are juxtaposed in such a way as to help the traveler (*sālik*) navigate his way upon the path (*ṭarīq*). These maxims aim to address issues that relate to both novices and advanced Ṣūfīs who have "arrived" at their destination (*al-wuṣūl ilā Allāh*). Most of the maxims are structured around a *ẓāhir* (outward) and *bāṭin* (inward) dichotomy. This is one of the basic dichotomies that al-Tirmidhī uses and it is widespread in both Sufism and Shīʿism. For example, the first maxim reads, *min ʿalāmāt al-iʿtimād ʿalā al-ʿamali nuqṣān al-rajāʾ ʿinda wujūd al-zalal*, "Among the signs of relying upon works (outward acts of worship) is the diminishing of hope when missteps occur." We can see here that the basic dichotomy that Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh is using is a *ẓāhir*/*bāṭin* dichotomy. Novices on the Ṣūfī path (*ṭarīq*) become discouraged when they make mistakes. That is a more or less universal feeling for a beginner in any discipline.

[580] Ibid. *Kitāb al-ḥikma*, fol. 6v.
[581] Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAṭāʾ Allāh. *Ṣūfī aphorisms. (Kitāb al-Ḥikam)*. Leiden: Brill. 1973, p. 19.

What Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh is trying to do is to refocus the 'Ṣūfī adept' from giving unnecessary attention to his mistakes. These are outward acts created by God (note that Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh is coming from an Ashʿarī theological point of view) and the challenge for the Ṣūfī is to reorient inwardly toward God in spite of these mistakes. We can see here that *al-Ḥikam* (*The Aphorisms*) captures succinctly al-Tirmidhī's vision of *ḥikma*. *Al-Ḥikam* functions as a kind of manual that explains the pitfalls of the Ṣūfī path to God through a juxtaposition of opposites that frame an underlying meaning. The basic meaning of this *ḥikma* (wisdom) is that one should maintain consistent progress toward the goal and not worry about failures along the way.

Conclusion

While previous scholarship has discussed the influence of al-Tirmidhī on later concepts of *walāya*, it has not clearly identified the extent of that influence. Chodkiewicz broke new ground when he devoted a considerable portion of his *Seal of the Saints* to the ideas of al-Tirmidhī. However, in this work the influence of al-Tirmidhī is not fully appreciated. Part of the reason for this is that al-Tirmidhī has not been well enough understood and, as a result, the structure of his ideas that surface in the works of later Ṣūfī authors has been overlooked. We can also say that understanding al-Tirmidhī's thought will better aid in understanding the mystical thought of those who built upon his ideas. We attempted to demonstrate this in the discussion of the ring *mathal* and its importance to Ibn Arabī's doctrine of *walāya*. Al-Tirmidhī's approach to *ḥikma* also helps us to better understand the early Shādhilī masters and their use of *ḥikma* as a pedagogical tool for training disciples in the Ṣūfī path. Even more important, however, is the idea that al-Tirmidhī establishes a mode of 'thinking' about God and the world through *amthāl* (analogies) and *ḥikma* (wisdom), which was adopted by the later Ṣūfī tradition as an alternative

to speculative theology (Kalām) and philosophy (Falsafa). Ibn ʿArabī is the most celebrated example of this kind of thought in the Ṣūfī traditions; however, the ways that other important Ṣūfīs adopted these approaches and used them to expand the boundaries of mystical inquiry still needs to be more closely studied.

Conclusion

Islamic sainthood was not articulated as a vehicle of power and authority by Muslim theologians or mystics until al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī chose to use the language of *walāya* to communicate his vision for those who should inherit the charismatic legacy of the Prophet. Al-Tirmidhī was someone who blended various discourse streams within Islamic thought to produce a powerful doctrine of *walāya* that has inspired Islamic mystics ever since. We have used Foucault's episteme and concept of discourse to separate the layers of al-Tirmidhī's thought in order to understand how al-Tirmidhī produced such a synthesis and how it was appropriated and reinvented after him. Particularly useful in this approach was the work of Franz Rosenthal whose delineation of the various knowledge-types in Islam became the basis by which al-Tirmidhī's episteme was assessed. The results of this methodological process were quite fruitful. Many aspects of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood and gnoseology came to the fore that have not yet been adequately discussed or well understood. For example, we found that al-Tirmidhī's influence has reached beyond Islamic mysticism. We discovered that al-Tirmidhī was an important bridge between early Ḥanafī theology and the theology of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī, and this is highly significant for understanding the development of the Māturīdī School.

In Chapter 1 we discussed the way in which al-Tirmidhī's social and political context played an important role in structuring his doctrine of *walāya*. This represents an example of a social construction of knowledge in which patterns within the social sphere are internalized and

transformed to produce a new knowledge product. Al-Tirmidhī used the social institution of clientage (*walāʾ*) to configure his doctrine of *walāya*. This shows how al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood was not simply a mystical and religious doctrine, but was a doctrine that was responding to the social and political forces of his time. This lent al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* a transformative force that can be seen in its later application in Nīsābūrī Sufism of the 5th- Islamic century (11th-century C.E.).

In Chapter 2 we used al-Tirmidhī's episteme to better understand his concept of *ḥikma* and its Hellenistic roots. There has been much speculation about the Hellenistic influence on al-Tirmidhī but nothing decisive has been proposed by current scholarship. Understanding how al-Tirmidhī used a Pythagorean cosmology helps us better understand what he means by 'wisdom' and how he reconfigures Pythagorean wisdom to function within an Islamic milieu. If we did not understand the tripartite structure of al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology, we would not understand how he used Pythagoreanism to support his claims about *walāya*. Al-Tirmidhī's main concern was to understand the intrinsic meaning of *walāya* by incorporating *ḥikma* as a way of articulating its non-dual nature. While al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma* is clearly inspired by Hellenistic precedents, he reworks and redefines the concept of *ḥikma* as well as the purveyors of *ḥikma* (*ḥukamāʾ* or sages) and then uses them to represent ideals within Islam. Instead of Pythagoras being the ideal 'Sage', it is Wahb b. Munabbih. An early exemplar of wisdom for al-Tirmidhī is the second Caliph ʿUmar and not Plotinus or Aristotle. This type of transformation of wisdom from a Hellenistic to an Islamic context is easy for al-Tirmidhī because *ḥikma* is already a topic found in Qurʾānic vocabulary and its unexploited nature lends it to being reconstituted. The subject matter of *ḥikma*, however, clearly demonstrates its Hellenistic legacy in matters that are both human and divine including such worldly topics as medicine or more spiritual topics such

as the 'diseases' of the soul. *Ḥikma* is primarily a worldly (*dunyawī*) knowledge that encompasses knowledge of the opposites (*aḍdād*) and how they function in the world. In this way, al-Tirmidhi's use of *ḥikma*, within his larger gnoseology, can be construed as a comment on the importance of 'science' and its place vis-à-vis religious knowledge.

Chapter 3 focused on al-Tirmidhī's discourse stream of Kalām and his particular involvement in the Ḥanafī/Murjiʾī theological tradition. The relationship between al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and Ḥanafī theology has been posited but not well understood. Part of the difficulty in situating al-Tirmidhī within this discourse stream has been a lack of scholarly work in filling out the various stages in Ḥanafī theological development, particularly the period between the early creedal texts and the work of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī. It is these texts, however, that best highlight al-Tirmidhī's involvement in Ḥanafī theology. The connections range from his approach to heresiography to subtle arguments concerning belief and the reconciling of free will with predestination. We can see in this milieu that the light-basis for knowledge was not simply an assumption found within mystical circles but was basic to early Ḥanafī theology in the 9th-century C.E. Early Ḥanafī theologians such as al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī were also mystics in their own right. The integration of theology and mysticism in this milieu should challenge the assumption that mysticism somehow developed in opposition to theology (Kalām) or even jurisprudence (Fiqh), given that Ḥanafī scholars of theology were almost always scholars of jurisprudence as well. This conclusion also counters the often held belief that Ḥanafīs were generally opposed to mysticism in contrast to Shāfiʿīs who are credited as supporting Baghdād Sufism. Our reading of al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī indicates that there was, in fact, no exclusive connection between Shāfiʿīs and Ṣūfīs in Nīshāpūr from the 4th- to 6th- Islamic centuries (10th- to

12th- centuries C.E.). This provides an alternative reading to that of Malamud who argues that there was such a connection.

In Chapter 4 we looked at al-Tirmidhī's involvement in the discourse stream of early Islamic mysticism along with other important early figures such as al-Junayd and al-Tustarī. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's concept of the soul in addition to his mystical vocabulary represent consistent themes when we compare these ideas to other mystics of his time period. One of the reasons that al-Tirmidhī has been cast as an outlier in Islamic mysticism can be attributed to what I consider to be a Baghdād-centric view of Islamic mysticism that has privileged al-Junayd's Baghdād School as the progenitor of Sufism. However, when we read the writings of mystics in the 4th- Islamic century (10th- century C.E.) such as al-Sarrāj and al-Kalabādhī, it is clear that they do not use the term Sufism (*taṣawwuf*) to only represent a particular mystical school of thought, rather, they are refering to Islamic mysticism in general as a *meta-madhhab*. Al-Kalabādhī, as a systematizer of Sufism who also sought to introduce Sufism to a number of the *ʿulamāʾ* of Khurāsān and Transoxania, made use of several mystical and theological constructs that bear al-Tirmidhī's stamp. The fact that this connection between al-Kalabādhī and al-Tirmidhī has been missed in previous scholarship on Islamic mysticism is a testament to the need for further study of the works of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. It is al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī, however that integrate al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of *walāya* most effectively into what became Sufism in its more mature form. This synthesis and formulation of Sufism as a *meta-madhhab* developed amid the backdrop of inter-factional conflict that eventually destroyed the city of Nīshāpūr. Nīshāpūrī Sufism was inclusive of the various *madhhabs* and transcended the divisive allegiances of Nīshāpūrī society. In this way, Sufism did not 'replace' local mystical movements like the Malāmatiyya and the Karrāmiyya, but was better able to adapt than these movements, which

continued to be active in Khurāsān until the Mongol invasions of the 13th- and 14th- centuries C.E.

The product of the great mystical synthesis of the 5th- Islamic century represents a form of mysticism that not only includes the vaulted mystical motifs of Baghdād Sufism, but also incorporates a model of religious authority that positions the Ṣūfī *shaykh* as a *walī* of Allāh for his disciples (*murīdūn*). This form of Islamic mysticism gave special privilege to the class of *ʿulamāʾ* and provided the theoretical basis for Sufism to compete with Shīʿism as a type of Islamic religious authority that would channel divine communication to those who not only spoke *about* the Prophet, but spoke *for* the Prophet and *like* the Prophet. The result of the incorporation of this new type of religious authority in its Nīshāpūr variety was striking and transformative for Sufism, which eventually led to its normalization in Muslim societies within two centuries of its origin in Nīshāpūr and its adoption all over the Muslim world. Based on this understanding of Sufism, we can no longer say that Baghdād Sufism *replaced* earlier varieties of indigenous Islamic mysticism, especially when the social structure of Nīshāpūrī Sufism was fundamentally different than that of early Baghdād Sufism.

In Chapter 5, rather than treating al-Tirmidhī's ideas as a tight system by attempting to resolve the diversity of his thought to uncover their underlying structure, we sought to present the significance of his most basic theoretical distinctions as they apply to Islamic thought and mysticism. If we assert, as Radtke does, that al-Tirmidhī was not a philosopher because his ideas are not systematic, then we would have to also eliminate Nietzsche and the later Heidegger from this category because neither of them follow a Cartesian and strictly system-oriented approach to philosophy. Al-Tirmidhī was not only a mystic, he was also a theologian and a jurisprudent and a philosopher. He focused his work on attempting to revamp the entire approach to Islamic

theology and jurisprudence in its Ḥanafī inspired form that he had received through the various discourse streams to which he was connected. His was a project of reform that addressed the very roots of Islamic legal methodology and it is apparent that this was not just an abstract proposal for him because it is evident that he wrote many of his works in such a way that they reflected this task of reform in their very structure and in the subject matter they put forward.

One of the signature aspects of al-Tirmidhi's doctrine of *walāya* is the 'seal of sainthood' and the idea that a 'sealer of saints' will come at the end of time to complete *walāya* just as the Prophet Muḥammad came to complete prophethood. While this aspect of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine is often cited and discussed, it is not well understood exactly how he arrived at such a doctrine. In Chapter 5 we discussed how al-Tirmidhī's preference for analogies (*amthāl*) led him to use motifs from the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth literature as a way of thinking about issues that were of social and religious importance in his time. The 'seal of sainthood' appears to have developed out of an important analogy that al-Tirmidhī uses throughout his works, which is the ring analogy. The ring analogy brings together all of the basic aspects of al-Tirmidhī's concept of the 'seal of sainthood' and the corresponding 'sealer of saints'. The concept of a 'sealer of saints' who is yet to come has important implications for Islamic mysticism and for an Islamic outlook on life. The generally accepted idea among Traditionalists and Ḥadīth culture is that the Islamic community has been in a perpetual state of decline from the time of the first three generations of Muslims. Al-Tirmidhī counters this idea with his own set of Ḥadīth, which he narrates, as well as a doctrine of sainthood that leaves open the possibility for exalted levels of spiritual attainment in the future that come close to the prophets themselves and surpass even the companions of the Prophet. The seal of sainthood was also connected to the idea promoted by al-Tirmidhī that at any point in time there will always be forty of the *awliyāʾ* alive on earth, for the

sake of whom the world continues to exist and prosper. Both of these ideas are integrated into Sufism's later cosmology such that we find Ṣūfīs today who will still go in search of the *awliyāʾ* of their time to benefit from them and to access their spiritual blessings.

Many of the major proponents of Islamic mysticism after the 3rd Islamic century (9th-century C.E.) read and contemplated the ideas of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. We can see this from al-Kalabādhī to al-Hujwīrī to al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī. This was also true of Ṣūfīs and Muslim mystics of later generations such as Ibn ʿArabī and the eponyms of the Shādhilī Ṭarīqa. Ibn ʿArabī is foremost among these and while it is clear that he read al-Tirmidhī's works and was in conversation with his ideas, the extent to which Ibn ʿArabī patterned many of his fundamental concepts on ideas first proposed by al-Tirmidhī is less well known. The connection between al-Tirmidhī and Ibn ʿArabī is so important that it would not be possible to fully appreciate Ibn ʿArabī and his mystical ideas without an informed understanding of al-Tirmidhī's basic premises and doctrines. In Chapter 6 we demonstrated this with a discussion of how Ibn ʿArabī structures his own doctrine of sainthood on the ring *mathal* of al-Tirmidhī. Reflecting upon Ibn ʿArabī in this light uncovers important aspects of his non-dual mysticism and shows how his approach differs from al-Tirmidhī. Ibn ʿArabī builds on al-Tirmidhī's ring *mathal* by incorporating other analogies to explicate his doctrine of sainthood such as the analogy of the gold and silver bricks that are missing from the 'wall of prophethood'. While Ibn ʿArabī is generally considered to be more influential than al-Tirmidhī on Islamic mysticism, our comparison between their two doctrines of *walāya* indicates that al-Tirmidhi's doctrine carried more social and political influence, especially when we see how al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood was the foundation for the development of Sufism.

Finally, in Chapter 6 we discussed the way that the Shādhilīs adopted and built upon al-Tirmidhī's notion of *ḥikma* as a way of developing a 'Ṣūfī science'. *Ḥikma* reflects the more practical side of al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and proved to be a useful framework within which the early Shādhilī masters communicated the precepts of their spiritual path to their followers. The book *al-Ḥikam* (*The Aphorisms*) became so well known that its influence spread far beyond the confines of the Shādhilī brotherhood. The early Shādhilīs definitely read al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī closely as is attested by the works of the foremost spokesman of this brotherhood, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh. In addition to the use of al-Tirmidhī's concept of *ḥikma*, we also find that the early Shādhilīs incorporated al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood with its indications of the optimism that al-Tirmidhī's particular approach engenders.

Our study of sainthood and its early development in Islamic mysticism demonstrates that there is still much that we do not know about this early period and that there is a patent need for more research in this area. We were not able to encompass the wide variety of topics within al-Tirmidhī's multitude of works, but the hope is that through this study we can begin to better appreciate the complexity of al-Tirmidhī's contribution to sainthood and Islamic mysticism's multi-faceted nature. It is also hoped that these findings will shed more light on the development of Sufism and its indebtedness to al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology and his doctrine of sainthood. The questions that this study opens are many. An area that needs further exploration is al-Tirmidhī's approach to Fiqh (jurisprudence) and the potential influence he had on the development of Ḥanafī legal methodology. In the topic of theology there is much more that can be done to trace the contributions of al-Tirmidhī to Māturīdī theology and their eventual incorporation into Ashʿarī theology by al-Taftāzānī. In the area of Islamic mysticism, al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood highlights the contrasting approaches to sainthood that differentiate eastern Islamic

mysticism from western Islamic mysticism. Both of these trends converge in the person of Ibn ʿArabī and a study of his doctrine of sainthood in this light could further our knowledge of how the Islamic doctrine of sainthood became a more developed form in later Sufism.

Of particular interest to us is how sainthood has come to represent a form of religious authority in Islam that has been successful in adapting and adjusting Islam to new contexts and cultures. Ṣūfī *shaykhs* would not have been able to do this without inwardly recognizing their custodial authority to interpret the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth to serve these ends. The advent of Salafism and Wahhābism represents a potent challenge to this authority, one that prefers a 'strict constructionist' and textual approach to Islam rather than a human-centered approach. Our discussion of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood brings up important questions about the ability of Sufism to perpetuate its model of religious authority in a modern context. It remains to be seen how Ṣūfī groups in the modern era will respond to Salafī and Wahhābī criticisms of their fundamental authority structures. Yet, if we take al-Tirmidhī to heart, we can only be optimistic about the future of this discourse, which will be a struggle for the very heart of Islam.

Appendix A

Correlation in Points of Doctrine between al-Kalābādhī and al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī in Arabic

الحكيم السمرقندي	الكلاباذي
(١)لا يشك في إيمانه	أدنى شك فيه كفر
∅	صفة التكوين
∅	أسماء الله ليست هي الله
(٤٠) أن يعلم أن ما في المصاحف مكتوبا هو قرآن بالحقيقة لا بالمجاز	القرآن كلام الله: متلو بألسنتنا مكتوب في مصاحفنا محفوظ في صدورنا غير حال فيها كما أن الله تعالى معلوم بقلوبنا مذكور بألسنتنا معبود في مساجدنا غير حال فيها
	ليس له جسم وهو ليس عرضا
(١٢) وهذه الكتب كلها كلام الله وصفته وهي غير مخلوقة	كلام الله صفة من صفاته
(٥٠) فقل له إنّ الله تعالى قال بلا هجاء بعد هجاء وبلا حرف بعد حرف وبلا نغمة بعد نغمة وبلا صوت بعد صوت وبلا وقت بعد وقت	الكلام النفسيّ
(١٢)أن يقول القرآن كلام الله تعالى غير مخلوق	القرآن كلام الله
(١٢)أن يقول القرآن كلام الله تعالى غير مخلوق	القرآن غير مخلوق
(٣١)أن يرى رؤية الله تعالى من الجنة حقا	اتّفقوا أنّ الله سبحانه وتعالى لم يروه أحد إلا في الآخرة
(١١) أن يرى كل أفعال العباد مخلوقة	خلق الله سبحانه وتعالى كل أعمال بني آدم
(٦)تقدير الخير والشر من الله تعالى	خلق الله سبحانه وتعالى الشر

(٥٣) الاستطاعة مع الفعل	خلق الله سبحانه وتعالى الاستطاعة فيهم
(٥٣) الاستطاعة مع الفعل	القوة تأتي في نفس وقت الفعل ليس قبله وليس بعده
∅	الكسب: قوة الفعل مخلوقة للإنسان
∅	يمكن الإنسان أن يفعل عكس ما نوى بالقوة
∅	لا ينبغي لله أن يفعل الأصلح
(٣٩) أن يعلم أنّ الله تعالى فعل ما شاء ويفعل ما يشاء إن فهم الخلق أو لم تفهم خيرا أو شرّا	الثواب والعقاب ليس من جهة الاستحقاق لكن من جهة المشيئة والفضل والعدل
(٣٤)أن يعلم أنّ الله تعالى يصيّرر السعيد شقيّا بعدله ويصيّر الشقي سعيدا بفضله	لو عذّب الخلق كلهم لم يكن ذلك ظلما منه ولو أدخل الخلق كلهم في الجنة لم يكن ذلك مستحيلا له
∅	لا يفعل بعلّة
∅	الظلم وضع الشيء في غير موضعه وليس في أفعال الله أي ظلم
∅	الوعد والوعيد
(٢١)أن يرى الصراط حقا	أقرّوا بالصراط – جسر
(٢٠)أن يرى الميزان حقا	أقرّوا بالميزان
(٣٨) وقال إنّ للنار سبعة أبواب فباب منها لأمتك من أصحاب الكبائر الذين خرجوا من الدنيا بغير توبة فيعذبهم الله تعالى فيها على قدر ذنوبهم ثم يخرجون منها بالإيمان	الله سبحانه وتعالى يخرج من النار من كان في قلبه مثقال ذرة من الإيمان
(٢٢)أن يعلم أن الجنة والنار مخلوقتان لا يفنيان ولا تبيدان ويرى ذلك حقا	أقرّوا بتأبيد الجنة والنار وأنهما مخلوقتان وأنهما باقتان أبد الآبد
(٤)أن لا يكفر أحدا من أهل هذه القبلة بالذنب	أهل الكبائر من عند المؤمنين مسلمون
(٣)أن يصلّي خلف كل بر وفاجر ويراه حقا	رأوا الصلاة خلف كل بر وفاجر
(٥)أن يصلي على جنازة كل صغير وكبير من أهل هذه القبلة ويراه حقا	رأوا الصلاة على كل من مات من أهل القبلة

(٨)أن يصلّي خلف كل أمير صلاة العيدين والجمعة ويراه حقا	رأوا الجمعة والجماعات والأعيان واجبة على من لم يكم له عذر من المسلمين مع كل إمام بر أو فاجر
(٢٥)(٢٦)(٢٧)(٢٨)	أجمعوا على تقديم أبي بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي رضي الله عنهم
(٢٤)أن تشهد للمبشرة من أصحاب رسول الله صلّى الله عليه وسلّم بالجنة ويرى ذلك حقا	رأوا أن من شهد له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بالجنة فهو في الجنة
(٧)أن لا يخرج على أحد من المسلمين بالسيف بغير حق	لا يرون الخروج على الولاة بالسيف وإن كانوا طلمة
∅	يرون الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر واجبا لمن أمكنه بما أمكنه
(١٣)أن يرى عذاب القبر حقا، (١٤)أن يرى سؤال منكر ونكير حقا	يؤمنون بعذاب القبر وسؤال منكر ونكير
(١٧)أ يرى ليلة المعراج عروج النبي عيله السلام إلى السماء حقا	أقرّوا بمعراج النبي ببدنه
(٣١)أن يرى رؤية الله تعالى من الجنة حقا	يصدّقون بالرؤيا
(٣٤) من مات من أولاد الكفار	أطفال المؤمنون مع آبائهم في الجنة واختلفوا في أطفال الكفار
(٩)أن يرى المسح على الخفّين في السفر والحضر حقا	أجمعوا على أن المسح على الخفين حق
(٥٨) وإنّ الله تعالى لا ينقص من رزق المسيء بإساءته ولا يرزق المحسن بإحسانه	جوّزوا أن يرزق الله الحرام
(١٠)أن يرى الإيمان عطاء الله عزّ وجلّ	أجمعوا أن نعيم الجنة لمن سبق له من الله السعادة من غير علّة
(١١)أن يرى أفعال العباد مخلوقة لله تعالى	الأفعال علامات وأمارات على ما سبق لهم من الله
	أجمعوا أن الدليل على الله هو الله وحده
(٣٥)أن يعلم أنّ عقول الكفّار لا يستوي مع عقول الأنبياء والمؤمنين	أجمعوا أنه لا يعرفه إلا ذو عقل

(١٦)أن يرى شفاعة الرسول صلّى الله عليه وسلّم لأصحاب الكبائر من أمّته حقا	أَجمعُوا على أَن الاقرار بجملة مَا ذكر الله تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابه وَجَاءَت بِهِ الرِّوَايَات عَن النَّبِي صلى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسلم فِي الشَّفَاعَة وَاجِب
(٣٢)أن يعلم أن مراتب الأنبياء عليهم السلام ومنازلهم أعلى وأفضل من مراتب الأولياء	وَأَجْمعُوا جَمِيعًا أَن الْأَنْبِيَاء أفضل الْبشر وَلَيْسَ فِي الْبشر من يوازي الْأَنْبِيَاء فِي الْفضل لَا صديق وَلَا ولي وَلَا غَيرهم
(٣٦) أن يرى أنّ الله تعالى لم يزل خالقا لم يتغيّر عليه حال	وَاخْتلفُوا فِي أَنه لم يزل خَالِقًا فَقَالَ الْجُمْهُور مِنْهُم وَالْأَكْثَرُونَ من القدماء مِنْهُم والكبار إِنَّه لَا يجوز أَن يحدث لله تَعَالَى صفة لم يَسْتَحِقهَا فِيمَا لم يزل
(٣٧) أن يرى أنّ الله تعالى له علم وقدرة فإنه عالم قادر	اجْتمعت الصُّوفِيَّة على أَن الله وَاحِد أحد فَرد صَمد قديم عَالم قَادر/ أَجمعُوا على أَن لله صِفَات على الْحَقِيقَة هُوَ بهَا مَوْصُوف من الْعلم وَالْقُدْرَة
(٤٤)(٤٥)	قَالُوا أصل الْإِيمَان إِقْرَار اللِّسَان بِتَصْدِيق الْقلب وفروعه الْعَمَل بالفرائض
(٤٦) أن لا يشبه الله تعالى بشيء	امتناعا بذلك من الْخلق أَن يشبهوه
(٤٨)أن تعلم أنّ الكسب يفترض في بعض الأوقات	أَجمعُوا على إِبَاحَة المكاسب من الحِرَف والتجارات والحرث وَغير ذَلِك مِمَّا أباحته الشَّرِيعَة على تيقظ وَتثبت وتحرز من الشُّبُهَات وانها تعْمل للتعاون وحسم الأطماع وَنِيَّة الْعود على الأغيار والعطف على الْجَار وَهِي عِنْدهم وَاجِبَة لمن ربط بِهِ غَيره مِمَّن يلْزمه فَرْضه

Appendix B
Kitāb al-Ḥikma
by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

Introduction to *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*

by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī

This is the first time that a transcription of al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma min ʿIlm al-Bāṭin* has appeared in print. This text is *a unicum*, it is the only extant witness to the archetype and is in a manuscript at the Inebey Library in Bursa, Turkey titled Haraççi Oġlu 806. There are four works by al-Tirmidhī in this manuscript. The three other texts besides *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* are: *Sabab al-Takbīr fī al-Ṣalā, ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ* and *ʿIlal al-ʿIbādāt*. Bernd Radtke has noted that *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* (folios 1-19) is "undotted, of volatile script and undated".[582] Furthermore, he commented that he was only able to conduct a cursory study of *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ*, which is the third of the four texts that make up the full manuscript. This suggests that he was not able to study *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* closely.[583] The text of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* begins on verso of folio 1 and is completed along with a colophon on verso of folio 18. The final page of the text includes extra-textual notices such as the lineage of the semi-mythical Ṣūfī figure Khiḍr, who some Muslims believe is the wise man who conveyed special knowledge to Moses from God. Recto of folio 19 includes an alphabetical list of the *ahl al-ṣuffa* (the people of the bench). These were the poor companions of the Prophet who lived in the mosque of Madīna and received charity given to the Prophet by others. This may have been of interest to those who owned this manuscript because

[582] Ibid. *Ein Islamischer Theosoph*, p. 57.
[583] Ibid, p. 58.

the *ahl al-ṣuffa* have been credited by some to have been the forebears of the Ṣūfīs.[584] This indicates that *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* was most likely circulated among Ṣūfī circles. Recto of folio 1 includes a list of the four books included in the manuscript as well as several references to the great fire of Istanbul in 1660 C.E. that consumed the city and irrevocably altered its demographic layout when Muslims became the majority of the population in the aftermath and reconstruction of the city.[585]

In addition to Radtke, Fuat Sezgin mentions *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* in GAS, number 42, in a list of al-Tirmidhī's works. The only additional information Sezgin provides is that the title of the work is difficult to discern from the title page.[586] The title actually appears to read *al-Khidma min ʿIlm al-Bāṭin* rather than *al-Ḥikma min ʿIlm al-Bāṭin* as would seem more logical. Al-Juyūshī mentions the manuscript in his review of al-Tirmidhī's published and unpublished works but does not go into detail about the contents of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* other than to give it a short one-paragraph gloss. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Baraka does not mention *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* in his detailed study of al-Tirmidhī's doctrine of sainthood. The absence of significant references to *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* and a lack of a detailed representation of its contents where references do exist may be due to the lack of witnesses to the text, as well as the obscurity of the handwriting and its undotted nature.

Dating and Transmission of the Text

The single witness that we have to *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* does not supply a date in the colophon. The three other works of al-Tirmidhī that are in the same manuscript do have dates and they seem to be written by the same hand. The date of the other three texts is the 25th of

[584] This is mentioned by al-Sarrāj in *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ*.
[585] Marc David Baer. "The great fire of 1660 and the Islamization of Christian and Jewish space in Istanbul". *International journal of Middle East studies.* 36 (2): 2004, pp. 159–160.
[586] Ibid. *GAS*, p. 658.

Rabīʿ al-Ākhar, 714 A.H. This translates to the 8th of August 1314 C.E. Despite the fact that *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* does not provide a date, there are several aspects of the text that help us to generally place this witness. The colophon at the end of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* is organized in the shape of an inverted triangle.[587] This stylistic feature became commonplace in the central Arab lands around the 10th/16th-century although it is known to have been used prior to this time period as is attested by the inverted triangle colophon in *ʿIlm al-Awliyāʾ*, which dates from the 14th-century C.E. A second feature that helps us narrow the date for *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* is the semi-dotted script. This was a feature of Arab scribal culture during the Middle Islamic period when the inclusion of dots or diacritic marks was sometimes seen as a defect (*ʿayb*) or as an insult to the reader.[588] This indicates that this witness to *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* was probably penned during the Mamluk period or early Ottoman period in Greater Syria (or possibly though unlikely Egypt) during the 14th- or 15th-centuries C.E. Adam Gacek presents a semi-dotted handwriting specimen from the 14th-century C.E. that is similar to the style of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* found here.[589] For *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, the hand is barely pointed, rather casually with elongated, angled with a somewhat spread or flattened character (though curvilinear), especially with descenders such as the final Nūn, final Lām, final Kāf, final Sīn, final Shīn, etc. This, together with the form used for the initial Hāʾ, the sweeping *shaqq* on even the final Kāf, the free assimilation of some letters and pointing (especially final Hāʾ with preceding Rāʾ), and the lack of pointing for Yāʾ and Alif Maqṣūra suggest Greater Syria as an origin.[590] The paper seems to indicate a later date than the 14th-century C.E. with sometime in the 15th- or 16th-century C.E. as more likely. This is with the

[587] Gacek, Adam. *The Arabic manuscript tradition a glossary of technical terms and bibliography*. 2001, p. 74.
[588] Ibid, p. 145.
[589] Ibid, p. 256.
[590] This analysis was provided by Evyn Kropf, an expert codicologist at the University of Michigan whom I consulted about the date and origin of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*.

caveat that this assessment was done from a color scan of the manuscript and not through an examination of the actual manuscript. The note on the opening flyleaf does provide a rough terminus ante quem of 17 Dhū al-Qaʿda 1071 A.H. [ca. 14 July 1661]. Unfortunately, we do not have any substantial information concerning the transmission of the text other than the name of the patron, Khājuman Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad al-Shaykhānī. This is not likely the Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad al-Shaykhānī al-Qādirī (d. 1119/1707) mentioned by Carl Brockelmann, since this would put the manuscript date later than our terminus ad quem, dating sometime from the late 17th- or early 18th-centuries C.E.

The Relevance of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*

In the Introduction to the dissertation we provided an overview of al-Tirmidhī's major works. *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* comes under the rubric of works that discuss esoteric interpretation. *Ḥikma* is connected to the knowledge of metaphysical causes and how they connect to phenomena in the world. In this way *ḥikma* functions as a type of esotericism in which the *ḥakīm* interprets the esoteric meanings behind various acts of worship. As *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* shows us, *ḥikma* is much more than simple esotericism. It also relates to understanding human vices and the nuances of the soul's passions. In this capacity the *ḥakīm* can guide spiritual novices through the various stages of spiritual attainment. Al-Tirmidhī likens the *ḥakīm* to a guide who helps others travel safely through the wilderness because this guide understands its many dangers and knows how to avoid them. *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* is the only book by al-Tirmidhī that solely addresses the knowledge-type of *ḥikma* (wisdom). In *Kitāb Bayān al-ʿIlm*, al-Tirmidhī clearly distinguishes between three types of knowledge, with *ḥikma* being the intermediate stage of knowledge between religious textual knowledge and *maʿrifa* (gnosis), which is a higher stage of knowledge

that is bestowed directly from God. The other books in the category of 'esoteric interpretation' deal with the application of *ḥikma*, while *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* deals with the nature of *ḥikma* itself. This is significant because it further supports the notion that the *ḥukamāʾ* belong to a category that is separate from the *awliyāʾ* (saints). This is a hypothesis argued in the dissertation that we find supported by *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*.

The *Ḥikma* Genre

Most early Islamic texts that bear the name *ḥikma* are associated with both Shīʿism and its attendant fascination with Greek Neoplatonism. The Druze *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, using the same name, immediately comes to mind as does the *Rasāʾil al-Ḥikma* of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā. The first of these two Ismāʿīlī texts was produced during the 11th-century C.E. in Fatimid Egypt. The second text is closer to al-Tirmidhī both temporally and geographically and reflects the developments of the vibrant cultural and intellectual milieu of 10th-century C.E. Iraq. Al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* does not exhibit the clear emanationist structure that we find in the previous two books. Al-Tirmidhī's theology in *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* does not present God as an abstract principle, but rather as a personal and intentional God who plans the affairs in the world and intervenes in them directly through his creative fiat. Thus, while it would seem natural to connect al-Tirmidhī's work to this later genre, we must realize that it is the product of a very different intellectual milieu. Al-Tirmidhī's *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* draws its inspiration from the Ḥanafī theological movement that was active in eastern Khurāsān and Transoxania where al-Tirmidhī lived and wrote. It is in this Ḥanafī/Māturīdī discourse stream that we find another *ḥikma* tradition based primarily in Pythagorean notions of wisdom and influenced possibly by the Buddhist concept of non-duality. As we demonstrated in Chapter 2 of the dissertation, al-

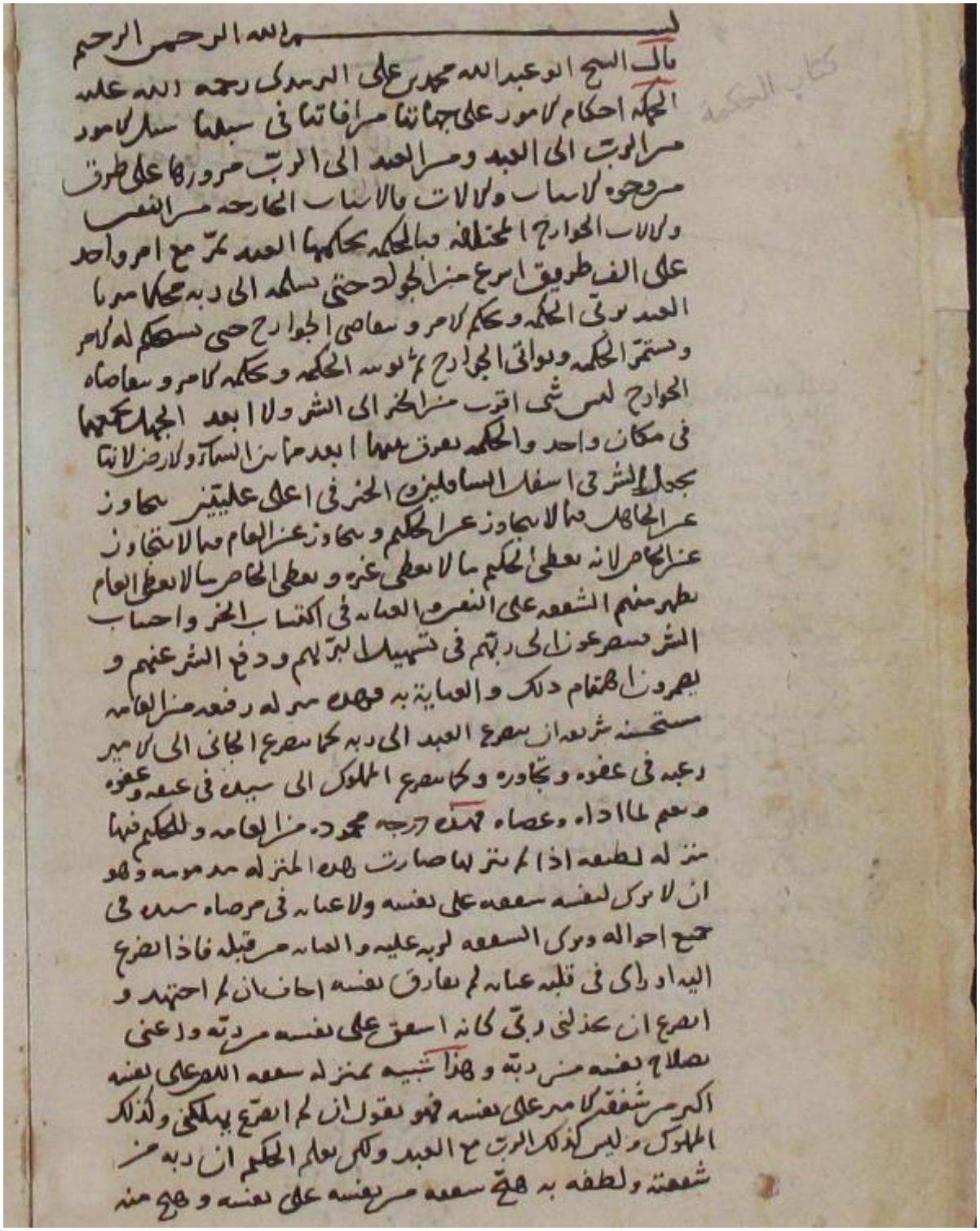
Tirmidhī's understanding of the interplay between duality and non-duality is reflected in al-Māturīdī's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*.

One of the central themes in *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* is *walāya* and the connection between the *ḥakīm* (sage) and the *walī* (saint). *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* sets out to identify the knowledge of the *ḥakīm* within the larger context of *walāya*. The *ḥakīm* is one type of *walī*, but not the highest type. In both the *Rasāʾil* of al-Junayd as well as in *Kitāb al-Ḥikma*, the *ḥakīm* is styled as a 'doctor of the soul'. Just as the medical doctor has knowledge of the various elements and how they connect to the body, so does the *ḥakīm* have knowledge of the states of the soul and its various maladies. The *ḥakīm* is someone who guides a novice through the treacherous path towards God. This is because the *ḥakīm* knows the 'pathways' to and from God. This discussion of the *ḥakīm* is the precursor to the idea of the Ṣūfī *shaykh* who is a doctor of the soul for his novices. Al-Junayd juxtaposes the *ḥakīm* to the scholar of outward knowledge (*ʿālim*) but does not contrast him to the *walī*. Al-Tirmidhī brings both the scholar of outward knowledge and the *walī* (saint) into his more developed gnoseology and thereby defines the *ḥakīm*. So, while *ḥikma* and the *ḥakīm* serve to frame *walāya* and the *walī*, the whole structure of al-Tirmidhī's gnoseology also defines the role of the *ḥakīm* vis-à-vis both scholars of outward knowledge (*ʿulamāʾ*) and bona fide saints (*awliyāʾ*). Scholars who study al-Tirmidhī have interpreted him as being averse to the notion of discipleship. This is primarily based upon a letter he wrote to a correspondent from Rayy who asked him about keeping the company of a "man who you hope for increase from". Al-Tirmidhī was responding to someone who asked him for spiritual advice concerning the keeping of company of someone who would help to increase his spiritual state. Al-Tirmidhī was negative about the proposition, advising the questioner to travel the path of *maʿrifa* (gnosis), not by seeking the creator (*khāliq*) through a creation (*makhlūq*), but rather to seek the creator (*khāliq*)

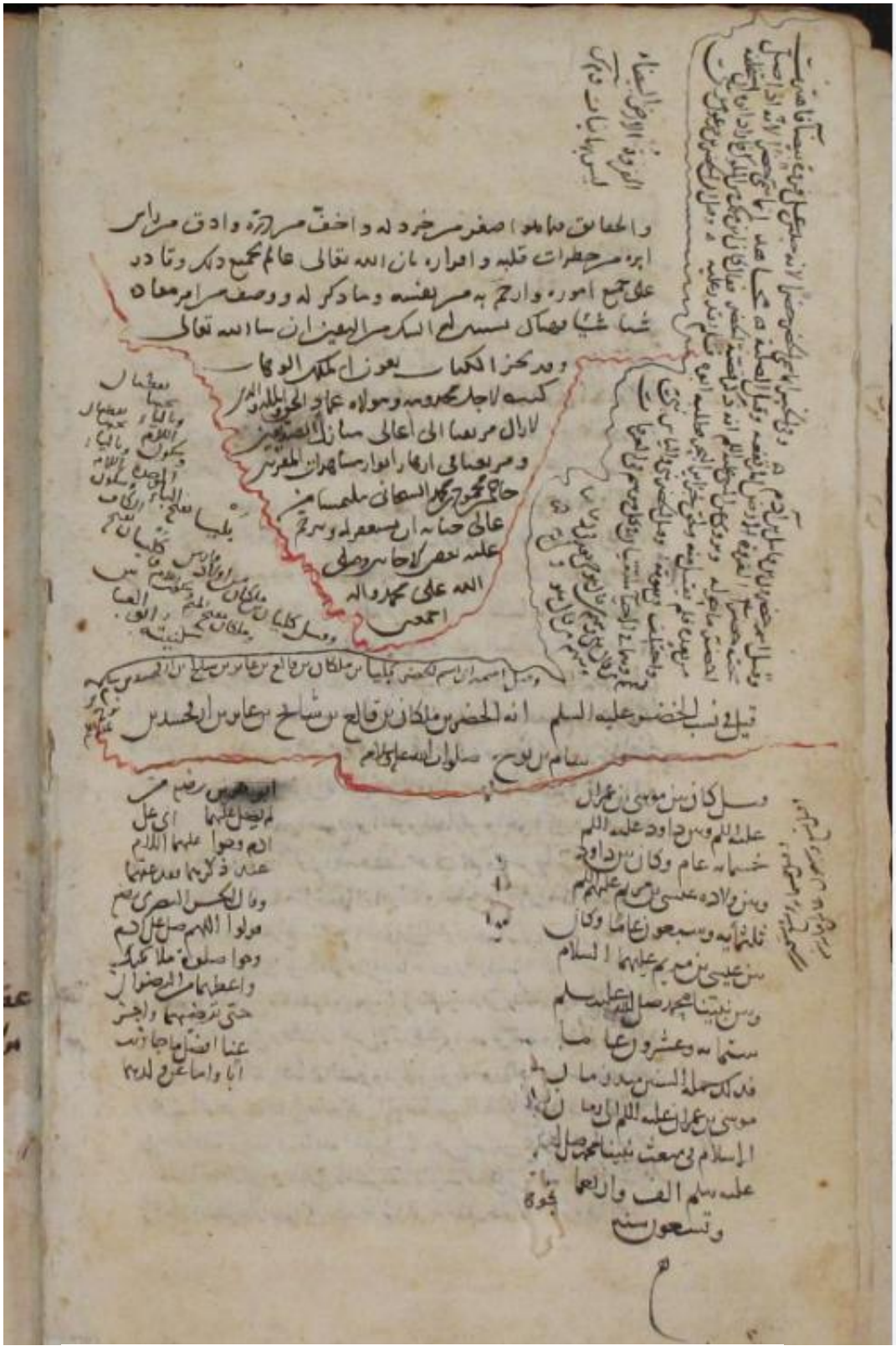
through the creator himself.[591] *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* helps us to contextualize this answer to the questioner from Rayy because it is clear from *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* that al-Tirmidhī considered recourse to the *ḥakīm* as essential for the would-be aspirant who is requesting guidance while on the path that leads to God (*al-ṭarīq ilā Allāh*). We can better understand the *ḥakīm* if we contextualize him in terms of the Malāmtiyya, an important mystical movement in Khurāsān during al-Tirmidhī's lifetime. We know that al-Tirmidhī was in conversation with the major proponents of this mystical approach. Al-Tirmidhī's concept of the *ḥakīm* is very similar to the Malāmatī 'master' whose knowledge of the soul enabled him to train and guide aspirants in the Malāmtī doctrine that centered on 'constant blame of the soul'. When al-Tirmidhī positions the bona fide saints (the highest form of *awliyāʾ*) above these *ḥukamā*, he is saying that there is a degree higher than the Malāmatī sage and that 'the path of blame' is one stage on the mystical path within his larger doctrine of *walāya*. Al-Tirmidhī's notion of the *ḥakīm* (as juxtaposed to the *walī*) accords closely with the subsequent notion of the Ṣūfī *shaykh*. As Sufism progressed, a distinction between the Ṣūfī *shaykh* and the *walī* developed. While the novice to the Ṣūfī path should ideally see his *shaykh* as a *walī*, the Ṣūfī *shaykh* generally does not and cannot claim this rank. Of course, many Ṣūfī *shuyūkh* (pl. *shaykh*) have claimed the highest degrees of *walāya*, but theoretically speaking, this should be the exception rather than the rule. As we saw with the Shādhiliyya, the Ṣūfīs were more comfortable talking about *ḥikma*, which relates to the guidance of novices on a practical level, but doesn't entail the claim of *walāya*. However, it is significant to note that in al-Qushayrī's characterization of the master-disciple relationship, the Ṣūfī *shaykh* effectively becomes the *walī* for his immediate students with the caveat that the *shaykh* cannot be

[591] Ibid. *Drei Schriften*, pp. 171–172.

completely certain about his *walāya*, which means that others are not required to follow his authority.



First page of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* from Haracci Oglu 806



Final page of *Kitāb al-Ḥikma* from Haracci Oglu 806

Folio 1v

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

قال الشيخ أبو عبد الله محمد بن علي الترمذي رحمه الله عليه

الحكمة إحكام الأمور[٥٩٢] على جهاتها من آفاتها في سبلها سبل الأمور

من الرب إلى العبد ومن العبد إلى الربّ مرورها على طرق

من وجوه الأسباب[٥٩٣] والآلات فالأسباب الخارجة من النفس

الآلات[٥٩٤] الجوارح المختلفة فبالحكمة يحكمها العبد يمرّ مع أمرٍ واحد

على ألف طريق أسرع من الجواد حتى تسلمه إلى ربّه محكما مبرئا

العبد يؤتى الحكمة ويحكم الأمر وتتعاصى الجوارح حتى يستحكم له الأمر

وتستمرّ الحكمة وتؤاتى الجوارح ثم تؤتيه الحكمة ويحكمه الأمر وتتعاصاه

الجوارح ليس شيء أقرب من الخير إلى الشر ولا أبعد[٥٩٥] الجهل يجمعهما

في مكان واحد والحكمة تفرق بينهما أبعد مما بين السماء والأرض لأنها

تجعل الشر في أسفل السافلين والخير في أعلى عليّين تتجاوز

عن الجاهل فيما لا تتجاوز عن الحكيم وتتجاوز عن العام فيما لا تتجاوز

[592] This definition of *ḥikma* accords with wording that al-Tirmidhī uses in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* when al-Tirmidhī says that *al-ḥikma nūr*^{un} *yakshif ʿan maknūn al-umūr*, wisdom is a light that uncovers the hidden realities of affairs. He also says that the sage, *yarā ʿawāqib al-umūr zayniha wa-shayniha*, he sees the outcomes of affairs both their excellent and shameful (outcomes). Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 4, p. 298.

[593] Observing cause and effect (*asbāb*) according to al-Tirmidhī does not negate the implications of *tawḥīd* (affirming God's unity). Ibid, vol. 7, p. 122.

[594] In *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* al-Tirmidhī uses *ālāt* to mean the limbs one uses for worship. Ibid, vol. 6, p. 337.

[595] The separation of opposites like good (*khayr*) and evil (*sharr*) is something repeated in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 236.

Folio 1v

١٤ عن الخاص لأنه يعطى الحكيم ما لا يعطى غيره ويعطى الخاص مما لا يعطى العام.
تظهر منهم الشفقة على النفس والعناية في اكتساب الخير واجتناب
الشر فيتضرّعون إلى ربهم في تسهيل البر لهم ودفع الشر عنهم و
يضمرون اهتمام ذلك والعناية به فهذه منزلة رفيعة من العامة
مستحسنة شريفة أن يتضرّع العبد إلى ربّه كما يتضرّع الجاني إلى الأمير[٥٩٦]
رغبة في عفوه وتجاوزه وكما يتضرّع المملوك إلى سيده في عنفه وعفوه
٢٠ ويقيم لما أداه وعصاه فهذه درجة محمودة من العامة وللحكيم فيها
منزلة لطيفة إذا لم ينزلها صارت هذه المنزلة مذمومة وهو
أن لا يرى لنفسه شفقة على نفسه ولا عناية في مرضاة سيده في
جميع أحواله ويرى الشفقة لربّه عليه والعناية من قبله فإذا تضرّع
إليه أو رأى في قلبه عناية لم تفارق نفسه أخاف أن لم أجتهد و
٢٥ أتضرع إن يخذلني ربّي كأنه أشفق على نفسه من ربّه وأعتني
بصلاح نفسه من ربّه وهذا شبيه بمنزلة شفقة اللص على نفسه
أكثر من شفقة الأمير على نفسه فهو يقول إن لم أتضرّع يهلكني وكذلك
المملوك وليس كذلك الرب مع العبد ولكن يعلم الحكيم أنّ ربّه من

[596] For a similar use of the ruler (*amīr*) analogy (*mathal*) see *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*: vol. 5, 284. The Prophet is portrayed as an *amīr* (ruler) and a *rāʿī* (shepherd).

Folio 1v

٢٩ شفقته ولطفه به هيج شفقة من نفسه على نفسه وهيج منه

Folio 2r

عناية واهتماما لكي يفوز عبده ولا يرى لنفسه مثقال حبّة خردل
ولا عناية للبر وإنما مثل[٥٩٧] تضرّعه كمثل والد شفيق على ولد له فظهرت
من ابنه جناية كانت سببا لهلاكه فغضب أبوه لشفقته عليه ولم يكن
يصل من الهلاك إلى الأب شيء وكان يصل إلى الابن ثم مع هذا
الغضب لم يجد أن يعاقبه أيضا لشفقته ورحمته وحكمته دس إلى
الابن رجلا كريما عليه فقال استشفع له إليّ حتى أخوّفه أنا وأتهدّده
بالعقوبة فإني إن تركته أهلك نفسه في جناياته وإن عاقبته أهلكته
عقوبتي أيضا فكذلك الرب تعالى وله الأمثل الأعلى وجّه إلى
عبده من عنده خصلة[٥٩٨] كانت لها منزلة منه حتى أنزلها قلب العبد
فتردّدت في جوارحه وفي الشفقة والتضرع والعناية والاهتمام
فهذه شفعا الله من عند الله دسّهنّ إلى العبد ثم اعْلم أنّ لهذه
الشفعاء عنده منزلة وخوّف العبد وأنذره وحذره باسمه عند
شفيعة في هلاكه ثم حرّك[٥٩٩] الشفعاء عند تخويفه فتحركت الشفقة

[597] This is an example of al-Tirmidhī's extensive use of analogies (*amthāl*) to illustrate his ideas. For more examples of al-Tirmidhī's analogies and his approach to analogical thinking see his book *al-Amthāl min al-Qurʾān wa-l-Sunna*. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī. *al-Amthāl min al-Kitāb wa-l-sunnah*. al-Fajjāla-al-Qāhira: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr. 1975.

[598] For a similar use of this term see al-Tirmidhī's discussion on the importance of maintaining kinship ties in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*: Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 328.

[599] Al-Tirmidhī uses this same mode of expression of "activation" in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* in his discussion concerning the relationship between the heart and the limbs. The heart as the leader of the limbs is the one that commands the limbs and activates them. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 6, p. 323.

Folio 2r

١٤ والعناية والهم والحزن والخوف بتحريك الربّ جلّ وعزّ ثمّ منّ
العبد عفوه ويجاوزه لهم وقال لولا منزلتهم ومكانهم منّي لفعلت
بك وفعلت حتى أنقذ عبده بهذا اللطف من هلاكه ثمّ لم يعرف
العبد هذا منه حتى كأنه اتهم ربّه وأضاف الشفقة إلى نفسه حتى
قال إن لم أجتهد أهلكني ربي كأنه لا يبالي بي إن لم أتضرّع و
إنما التضرع دسّس الرب إليه ثم الرب جل اسمه وتقدس مع جهل العبد
٢٠ بذلك لم يمنعه من إنقاذه وإيجابه إذ كان مراد الربّ من العبد ذلك
ومثله أيضا كملك مشفق على عبد له جاهل صار في أودية[٦٠٠] السباع
بجهله وعلم مولاه أنّ فيه هلاكه ودعاه إلى نفسه وحذّره تلك الأودية
فلمّا لم يكترث العبد دسّ إلى رجل وأعطاه سوطا[٦٠١] فلقيه فأقبل عليه
ضربا ضربا دكت رأسه فرارا وصاحب السوط يتبعه ضربا حيث ما
٢٥ توجه حتى أخرجه من تلك الأودية وأدّاه إلى مولاه فقال له
يا مولاي قد قبلت نصيحتك واتبعت أمرك والمولى يضحك
من جهله لأنّه عرف أنّه لم يفعل ذلك وإنّما مولاه أخرجه بالسوط
ثم يجزيه الخير مولاه ويكرمه بكرمه ويقول له نعم ما صنعت كأنه تبارك

[600] Al-Tirmidhī uses a similar analogy (*mathal*) to describe the source of knowledge and the way that it flows like a river through river valleys (*awdiya*). Ibid, vol. 2, p. 30–31.
[601] For al-Tirmidhī's use of the whip (*sawṭ*) as part of an analogy (*mathal*) to discuss disciplining the soul see *NU*, vol. 2 p. 311.

Folio 2r

٢٩ يعوّل (أي اعتمد) على قوله لما يعرف من جهله وهذا السوط هو الخوف من الرب

Folio 2v

١ وتعالى لا يزال يضرب قلب العبد ليخرجه من مهالكه حتّى
يفضي به إلى كرامة الرب لذلك والربّ يمدحه على ذلك وهو
الفاعل ومثله أيضا كمثل سيّد رأى بعبده في وادي الهلاك
فوجّه إليه دابّةً وأقواما وأمره أن يركب الدابّة وأمر اؤلائك
٥ أن يشدّوه عليها لأنّه قد علم أنّه لا يثبت عليها فإذا أراد أن
ينزل لم يقدر لمكان شدّه فإذا صار إليه قال
قد اتّبعت أمرك يا مولاي وقد علم أنه هو الذي فعل به ذلك
وهو يطريه من عبده على فعله به لا فعل عبده و يريه أنّه فعله
يعني فعل العبد كرما وجودا فهو غاية الكرم تبارك الكريم المجيد
١٠ الخلق ثلاثة أصناف يتقلّبون كلهم في الرحمة صنف أعلى
الخلق وصنف أسفل الخلق وصنف أوسط الخلق فالأسفل
له الرحمة العامّة التي وسعت كل شيء التي سبقت من الرحمن
وهُم الذين آتبعوا أهواءهم وظلموا أنفسهم وهُم أصحاب الشمال
والأوسط في الرحمة الخاص من العام وهُم الناظرون إلى الأسباب
١٥ الذين اقتصدوا[٦٠٢] وهُم أصحاب اليمين والأعلى في رحمة خاص الخاص

[602] Al-Tirmidhī represents the same three basic levels in his *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* and the second of the three levels are characterized as *muqtaṣidūn* (those who chart a middle path, it also connotes those who are average). This is the same characterization for those at the second level in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*. Ibid, vol. 1 p. 184.

Folio 2v

١٦ وهُم الناظرون إلى المسبب القائلون عنه الذين سبقوا الناس
كلّهم وهُم المقرّبون الماء نزل من السماء صافيا عذبا زلالا
وحياة وعيشا ومصلحة للخلق فهبط على السطوح و الحضيض
والبراز فصنف وضعوا آنيتهم تحت سطوحهم وكانت على السطوح
٢٠ أنجاس وأقذار فشبث الماء بالأقذار ودخل آنيتهم قذرا فاسدا
فاستعملوا منه وشربوا فمرضوا وماتوا وأنجسوا أطعمتهم وأنفسهم
وهُم الناظرون إلى أهوائهم المتمسكون بها النازلون تحتها
ولولا أنّ الرحمة امتزجت بأهوائهم ما عاشوا ولا حَيوا ثم إنهم
أفسدوا الرحمة بالأهواء فمرضت قلوبهم ونجست وماتت وصنف
٢٥ وضعوا الآنية تحت سطوحهم فطهّروا[٦٠٣] السطوح من الأقذار فدخل
الماء آنيتهم طاهرا إلا أنّه مشوب بالتراب والقذر والرمل والغثاء
فربّما أصابتهم آفة من قبل ذلك وكدر في ماءهم وتغيّر لونه إلا أن
يحتالوا حتى يصفوا وإن احتالوا فلا يكون صفاؤه كصفائه حيث
لم ينظف[٦٠٤] السطح وهُم الناظرون إلى الأسباب المقتصدون

[603] Al-Tirmidhī is referring here to ritual purification. This second group purified their roofs from *anjās* (ritual impurities) but not from regular impurities. This represents the level of implementation of the Sharīʿa through the implementation of rules of ritual purification.
[604] Here al-Tirmidhī is talking about purification in a general sense and not just ritual purification. Since ritual purification is more basic and essential it represents a form of purification above and beyond ritual purification and can be characterized as the level of Ḥaqīqa (reality).

Folio 3r

١ وصنف وضعوا آنيتهم تحت السماء فأخذوا ماء صافيا ما شابه
قذر ولا كدر ولا قذى فكان دواء للقلوب والنفوس والأجساد
له عذوبته وطيبه وصفائه ومنهم الناظرون إلى المسبب[٦٠٥] القائلون
عنه ثم إنّه يكون من الماء وحل وروائح تصيب المستقي فربّما سقط
٥ وربّما زلّ ولكنّ الساقط الزالّ لا يغضب على أحد لذلك ولا يجد
ولا يحقد لأنّه يرى أمرا سماويّا[٦٠٦] والذين يأخذون من السطوح ربّما
صاروا إلى ملامة الطيان والخادم وغيرهم إذا راؤا القذى والقذر
والتراب فصاروا في اختلاط وصخب وشرّ والمرأ يصحبه خمسة
أشياء لا يفارقهم ولا يفارقونه ومن هؤلاء الخمسة يكون نجاته إذا عرف
١٠ صحبتهم ويكون هلاكه إذا لم يعرف أوّل ذلك الربّ تعالى ثم النفس
ثم الدنيا ثم الناس ثم الشيطان فاصحب الرب بالحرمة والنفس
بالرياضة والدنيا بالحذر والناس بالرحمة والشيطان بالمحاربة
فإن صحبتهم على ذلك نجوت وفزت في الدارين وإلّا هلكت في
إحسانه الكثير إليك وشفقته العطوف عليك وعظمته القاهرة لك

[605] Al-Tirmidhī uses this terminology in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*. For the individual who is at the level of certainty (*yaqīn*), he focuses on the creator of causes and effects (*musabbib al-asbāb*) rather than only seeing causes and effects themselves. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 17.

[606] The term celestial (*samāwiyy*) and terrestrial (*arḍiyy*) are used in multiple instances in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*, primarily to describe the different natures of the soul (*nafs*) and the spirit (*rūḥ*). The important point here is that the term celestial, while rare for his time period, is used by al-Tirmidhī to describe a particular type of opposition. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 397.

Folio 3r

١٥ وقدسه الطاهر من الأقذار فمعرفة حرمة الاحسان النظر فيه والتذكّر
له والتفكّر فيه والشكر عليه وخوف زواله ومعرفة حرمة الشفقة
حسن الظنّ به في إختباره لك والرضى بقضائه في المحبوب والمكروه
والتفويض إليه والتوكّل أشدّ من توكّلك على الوالد الشفيق ومعرفة
حرمة العظمة التواضع له والفزع من سطواته ومَكْره والاحتقار
٢٠ للنفس وعملها الظاهر والباطن والصغير والكبير والتعظيم للصغير والكبير
من أمره ومعرفة حرمة القدس تطهير النفس عن العمل لغيره و
تطهير العمل بالاخلاص عن أقذار ما يشوبه من غيره إذ الطاهر لا يختار
القذر ولا يجاوره وتطهير القلب عن التعلّق بغيره وتطهير اللسان
عن التقلب[٦٠٧] في ذكر غيره فإذا فعلت ذلك فقد عرفته بالقدس إذ وصف
٢٥ نفسه به فقال الملك القدّوس وعرفته بالعظمة إذ وصف نفسه
بها فقال وهو العليّ العظيم وعرفته بالرحمة والشفقة فقال إنّه
رؤوف رحيم وعرفته بالإحسان إذ وصف نفسه به فقال تعالى إنّ
الله لذو فضل على الناس وأمّا رياضة النفس فعند أربعة أشياء
عند الشهوة والغضب والرغبة والرهبة إذا اشتهت لا تنيلها شهوتها

[607] Al-Tirmidhī uses this term in the same way in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* in the section on *suḥba* (companionship). The word *taqallub* generally has the meaning of "turning", however in this instance and the way it is used in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*, it has the meaning of "remaining" or "being at home in" in a particular state. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 45.

Folio 3v

وإذا غضبت لا ترضها وتكفها عن الرغبة وتحملها على الرهبة ولا تقدر على ذلك دون أن تجعل ربك بينك وبين نفسك فتنظر من ربك إلى نفسك ولا تجعل نفسك بينك وبين ربك فتنظر من نفسك إلى ربك. فبعّدْ نفسك وقرّب ربّك ولا تجعل بينك وبين ربك شيئا فترى

ربك هو المحرّك والمسكّن دون أن ترى ساكنا أو متحركّا فترغب إليه في تسكين المتحرّك وتحريك الساكن مؤمنا بذلك غير مرتاب ثم تحسن الظنّ به في ذلك مطمئنا غير مضطرب بتأييده ونصره وبفضله وكرمه واعلم أنك إذا وقفت ذلك الموقف استقبلك البلوى وهو الاطماع لما ترجو والاشراف على ما تطلب فإذا أشرفت على الطلبة

تخوفتَ فوتها وإن تحرّكت عن أصلك الأضل عند ذلك و فزعت إلى ما دونه من الأسباب خوف الفوت تحرّكت عن درجتك ووكلت إلى السبب والنظر إليه و الاعتماد عليه وإن صبرت وثبت عند خوف الفوت ولم تنزل عن مقامك أريت التأييد والنصرة والصنع إن شاء الله تعالى

وأما محاربة الشيطان فعند أربعة أشياء عند الأمر بروية الثواب

ومعاينته بالقلب واستيقانك به (النهي بروية العقاب وضده) وعند العجلة بخوف العثرة والزلّة واستيقانك بها وعند الكسل بخوف فوت النجاة والفوز واستيقانك

Folio 3v

به لا تمنى نفسك غير ذلك لأنّ الشيطان يطمعك في هذه المواضع بالرحمة
والعفو ليستدرجك بذلك وأما صحبة الناس فمن قبل أربعة أشياء
من قبل ضعفهم وموتهم وحسابهم وقرابتهم بينك. أما الضعف فإنّهم
لا يملكون لأنفسهم ضرا ولا نفعا كما لا تملك أنت فإن سلب إحسان المحسن منه
لم يقدر على إمساكه لضعفه وإن ابتلى المسيء لا يملك نفسه فتحرّجها منه
وهو يتمنى ذلك فهو مرحوم لضعفه. والموت يخرجهم عما هم فيه من الشهوات
واللذات والحساب يشغلهم بعد طول تردّدهم في الغفلة. وأما
القرابة فإنهم إخوانك و أخواتك فمن أقل رحمة وأقسى قلبا ممن
لا يرحم أخاه وأخته. وأمّا حذر الدنيا فعند أربعة أشياء عند
لذتها ومرارتها وغفلتها وغرورها. أما لذتها فاذكر عند سرعة انقطاعها
وطول مرارة العاقبة[608] أما في الدنيا فمن قبل العاقبة والندامة
والمؤنة والآفات وفي الآخرة العقوبة. وأما مرارتها فاذكر سرعة
زوالها وطول حلوة العاقبة. وأما غفلتها فأفق منها بالصاحب

[608] Al-Tirmidhī uses the same terms *ʿāqiba* (recompense) and *ʿuqūba* (punishment) in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* to mean, respectively, recompense for one's actions in the present life and punishment for one's actions in the next life. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, pp. 125, 140.

Folio 4r

١ الناصح والتذكر والفراغ من الاشتغال وإلاّ دامت بك فلا تصحو
إلا وأنت في الهلاك الداني وأما غرورها فإنها تغرك باليسير حتى
تحركك إلى الكثير وبالصغير حتى تحرك إلى الكبير وبالحلال حتى تحرّك
إلى الشبهة وبالشبهة حتى تحرّك إلى الحرام ونحو ذلك
٥ فاستعن في ذلك بتقصير الأمل واستعمال العقل وإذكاء اللب واستعن ببعض
هذه الخصال على بعض واجعل جملة استعانك في ذلك كله بالله الواحد
القهّار إذا اختلفت إلى الحكماء[٦٠٩] فلا تختلف على ارتياب واضطراب
ووسوسة ومشاورة لمن اتهمتهم ولم تشرع في أوديتهم إن ماء
البحر لا يكال بمكيال الكيّال ولا تستخرج جواهره بالمِغرفة ولا تتعلّم
١٠ الفروسية[٦١٠] في بيت الزجاج ولا تعرف طعم العسل بالسم ولا تنظر إلى عين
الشمس بالسراج أنّ لكل بحر جوهرا ولكل جوهر غائصا ولكل غائص
بنداراً ولكل بندار اختيارا ولكل اختيار بصرا إنّ لكل لون عيناً ولكل
عين بصرا ولكل بصر جوهرا لون النهار يؤدي الضوء إلى عيون الناس
ولون الليل يؤدي الظلمة إلى عيونهم. لون النهار يؤدي الظلمة إلى عيون

[609] The sages (*ḥukamāʾ*) represent an important category of people of knowledge. They are the middle category in al-Tirmidhī's basic tripartite division of people of knowledge. These are the scholars of outward knowledge (*ʿulamāʾ*), the sages (*ḥukamāʾ*) and the great ones or saints (*kubarāʾ* or *awliyāʾ*). This basic division is reflected in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* and *Kitāb al-ʿIlm* as well as other works by al-Tirmidhī. For al-Tirmidhī the function of the sages is to resolve contradictions and uphold the essential quality of the opposites by distinguishing between opposites (*aḍdād*). For an example of this usage of the sages (*ḥukamāʾ*) see *NU*, vol. 6, p. 350.
[610] For al-Tirmidhī's use of this term and the connection between horsemanship, training the soul and insight see *NU*, vol. 5, p. 189.

Folio 4r

الخفافيش ولون الليل يؤدي الضوء إلى عيونها. إنّ لكل ذوق طعماً [611]
ولكل طعم ذوقا ولكل ذوق جوهرا طعم العسل يؤدي إلى ذوق الإنسان
الحلاوة وإلى ذوق الكلاب البشاعة طعم الجيفة يؤدي إلى ذوقهي اللّذة
وإلى ذوق الإنسان الفساد كذلك الحكمة بين الحكماء والجهال الطبيب[612]
يستفيد البصر من علاج المريض والمريض يستفيد الشفا من علاج الطبيب
ويل للطبيب من تهمة المريض وويل له من استقراره قاذورات أسقامهم
وويل للمريض من وجع الأسقام وويل له من كيّ الطبيب لا المريض يدع
الطبيب ويريحه من ويل التهمة ولا الطبيب يقدر أن يهرب ويريحه
من ويل الكيّ المريض المتهم للطبيب المريد للصحة بين غمين بين غم
ووسوسة التهمة وغم ادراك الصحة من عنده والطبيب الرفيق يموت بين
غمين بين كساد دواءه النافع الشافي المجرّب وبين غم التعجب من فرار
المريض منه واستسقائهم بالسموم القاتلة كم زرع على السبخة فلم ينبت
وكم أطعم المريض عسلا فلم يستحلَ وكم استصح الأعمى فلم يبصر المنقذ
متهم عند من لم يجرّبه ولم يعرفه غير متّهم عند من جرّبه وعرفه الحكمة

[611] This is the first time that we see in any of al-Tirmidhī's works the use of the term *jawhar* meaning other than "gem" in its original Arabic meaning. The meaning of *jawhar* here seems to conform here more closely to the meaning of "essential substance" as it is understood in Greek or Hellenistic philosophy. It should be noted that Radtke claims that al-Tirmidhī did not use any such vocabulary. This would counter one of his main claims.
[612] In *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* al-Tirmidhī describes the *walī* (saint) as a doctor (*ṭabīb*) of God's servants. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 346.

Folio 4r

٢٩ من عند حكم الحكماء مبتدأها وإليه منتهاها فإن لم تختلسها عوارض الأعداء

Folio 4v

١ ينجو من أعدائها بقوة الصبر وجناح الإخلاص ولا قوّة إلى بالله العلي العظيم
الحكيم يحمل أثقال من دونه بسعة وطيبة ولا يحمل أثقال الحكيم من
ليس في درجته فلا ينبغي ان يظلم من دونه الجداول[٦١٣] لا تحتمل ماء النهر
وتضيق عنه والبحر إنّما جعل بحرا لتحمّل ما يدخله من الجداول الحكيم
٥ معدن[٦١٤] تأليف المشتبه من الأمور وإحكام الفاسد منها إنما جعلت علاة
الحدادين من الحديد لتحكم عليها آلات المحترقين فإن أردت احكامها على
المدر والخزف لم تقدر عليه لا تقتبس نور الحكمة[٦١٥] إلا عند الحكيم فإن طلبته
عند غيره لم يقدر عليه لا تغترف العسل من خابئة الخلّ ولا تجتني
التمر من شجر الشوك الخاص غير ناقض للعام والفرع غير ناقض للأصل
١٠ لعرض غير ناقض للحلق وإن كان داخلا بعض ذلك لها بعض متصلا و ثابتاً
منه النهار منسوب إلى الضوء وإن كان له الجحر والأسراب ظلمة فهذا الخاص
له العام والليل منسوب إلى الظلمة وإن حطّت فيه خواطر البرق فهذا
العرض له الحلق لا يوجد دخان إلا من نار وقد يوجد النار بغير دخان

[613] Al-Tirmidhī uses the same analogy (*mathal*) in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* of streams (*jadāwil*) leading to rivers (*anhur*) leading to seas (*buḥūr*) to explain the relative capacity of different types of individuals to carry the water (*māʾ*) of knowledge. Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 30–31.

[614] We have seen the use of the image of a mine (*maʿdan*) used throughout al-Tirmidhī's works, especially in relation to the ring analogy (*mathal*). The image of the mine is used to refer to the heart of the individual that can produce various types of gems and precious metals representing the meanings that occur to the heart from the unseen realm.

[615] Al-Tirmidhī represents wisdom (*ḥikma*) as light in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 298. This is contrasted to the *ʿilm* (knowledge) of the saints (*awliyāʾ*) which is related a direct experiencing of God through intimate colloquy (*muḥādatha*) and is characterized by certainty.

Folio 4v

فهذا الفرع في الأصل تركيب الحكيم آدات الاحتمال وهي الحكمة وطبعه
أدات التسخير وهو الحلق فهمها حاز عن الاحتمال الأضل وسمّع عن التسخير
ذلك بالقوارع وأهلك بالعطب تركيب الجهل أداة الاحتمال من قوائمه
وظهره وجميع أعضائه وطبعه أدات التسخير في لينه وانقياده فمتى
ما هرب عن الاحتمال أو تمرّد عن التسخير أجرض بالضرب أو أتلف بالذبح
ليس في درجة الحكيم من دونه إنما تركيب الذئاب[٦١٦] التمزيق والتفريس
وطبعه التمرّد في مخالبته وسفاهته وخبثه وشهوته للجيف فإن حاولت
منه تسخير الحمار لم تجد منه تركيب الظباء على الضعف والجبن وطبعها على اللين
الشاب يصحب الكلاب دهره ولا يقتدي بها في طباعها في الانتقام والطيش
والنباح والعَفنة لانه لم يره من جنسه ولم يطمع في الانتفاع بالاقتداء به
فكذلك الحكيم يعاشر السفهاء[٦١٧] دهره فلا يعجّل إذا عجّلوا ولا يطيش إذا طاشوا
ولا يصيح إذا صاحوا ولا يثب إذا وثبوا ولا يحقد إذا حقدوا ولا
يقتدي بهم في شيء من فعلهم لأنه لا يراهم من جنسه ولا يرى الانتفاع لنفسه
بذلك فمتى حاول الحكيم الاقتداء بالسفيه يوشك أن يمسح طبعه فيجعل

[616] Wolves (*dhiʾāb*) are used as a metaphor in al-Tirmidhī's works for the lower traits of the soul. Ibid, vol. 5, p. 285.
[617] Al-Tirmidhī uses a very similar wording in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* when he says: *al-ʿāqil yuʿāshir ahla dunyāhu ʿalā mā dabbar Allāh*, The intelligent person lives among the people of his world according to the way Allāh plans things. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 498.

Folio 4v

٢٨ على طبائعهم وإنّ لله خفيات من مكره وربّما مسخ البدن وربما مسخ

الطبع ويوشك أن يصير من طبع الشاب في لينه وسكونه وكفّ أذاه إلى

Folio 5r

طبع الكلاب قال الله تعالى واتل عليهم نبأ الذي آتيناه أياتنا
فانسلخ منها إلى قوله لعلّهم يتفكّرون[٦١٨] اللحم لا يأخذ طعما ولا لذّة ولا منفعة
ما لم يطبخ بالنار ويغلى وينضج فكذلك منفعة القلب لا يأخذ طعم الحكمة
ولا لذتها ولا منفعتها من الأخلاق الحسنة ما لم يطبخ بنار المكروه ويغلى
وينضج فمتيها وصلت الحرقة إلى مضغة الحكيم وتفشّت فيها فينبغي أن
يستنعم ذلك ويتوقّع النضج بعده وليس له أن يردّها بالحيلة والدفع
والاباء والجزع فتبقى مضغة نيّة فترجع خائبا من منفعة الحكمة فإن
اللحم متيما صببت الماء البارد في القدر عليه إذا وصل إليه الحران لا ينضج
ويبقى نيّا فلا تجد له لذة ولا منفعة ولا تستمر به بل تتآذى به ويورثك
التخمه والأسقام ويوشك أن يقتلك إذا داومت على أكله الصحبة
نار وأنت كائن فيها أحد الرجلين إما ذهبا وإما حطبا فإن كنت
ذهبا نفعتك الصحبة وعزلت عنك باطلك بإذن الله كما نفعت النار الذهب
وعزلت باطله وأخلصته وإن كنت حطبا فاحذر الصحبة فإنها تحرقك
كما تحرق النار الحطب فأما الذهب فهو العدل فإن كنت ذا عدل فأنت الذهب
والحطب هو الجور فإن كنت ذا جور فأنت الحطب فاحذر النيران
تعاهد ربك في بقيات الأمور من تسليط خلق من خلقه عليك أو تسليطك

[618] This is a reference to two verses in the Qurʾān from al-Aʿrāf, 7:175–176.

Folio 5r

على غيرك أو وقوع المكروه أو المجبور بك لمعا كلمعان البروق فهناك
تضل المعرفة عن ابن آدم وباشره هول الخطوب وشغل الأسباب فإليه فليكن
مفزعك حينئذ دون كل شيء فهو موضع الرحال والمعين عليه هو الله
إنّ الحكيم جلّ جلاله ركّب في الانسان أربع طبائع هنّ هلاك الانسان وقوامه
بإذنه وهي المرّة الصفراء والمرّة السوداء والدم والبلغم[٦١٩] فيقال إنّ المرة
الصفراء خلقت من النار وطبعها الحرارة والتبريد والحدّة والحرقة والاشتعال
وعمل النار والبلغم خلق من الماء طبعه اللين والقرب والتوسل والكرم
والمعروف والسهولة وأعمال الماء والبلغم ضد[٦٢٠] المرّة الصفراء كما أنّ
الماء ضد النار ويقال الدم خلق من الهواء وهو حار رطب وطبيعته
الأناة والفسحة والنجابة والرزانة والحسن والبهاء والجمال وهو مشاكلٌ
للروح على طبع الهوى والمرة السوداء يقال هي ريح خلقت من التراب وطبعها
اليبوسة والبرودة والحفة والعجلة والقلق والضيق و اللطافة والرقة
على طبع الريح وهو ضد الدم والله أعلم يخلق في ابن آدم هذه الأضداد فهي

[619] Al-Tirmidhī also refers to the humors in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* but only indirectly and not as a complete system as he does here. He argues for the importance of medicine and science, stating that these are supported by the Prophet. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 52.
[620] Seeing the humors as opposites is consistent with al-Tirmidhī's view of the world as composed of opposites (*aḍdād*) and is found throughout his works.

Folio 5v

تهيج الريح مرة باللين واللطف ومرة بالشدة والعنف فيقلع ويهدم
ويكسر تمعن إمعانا لا تلوي ولا تقر إلى أن يأتي إذن بارئها يبسطها على الماء
فيخمد مرة ويهيج الأمواج مرة وعلى النار فتوقدها وتشعلها وعلى الهواء
تحركه ويستمرئ منه الماء والأنداء بإذن ربها ومرة يأذن الماء بالطمو
والاهتياج والاعتلام فترخو وتغرق وتصير سيلا يمر مرا فهدم وتفسد
ومرة يسكنه ويلينه ومرة يشتعل النيران وينتج الحريق فيعجز القوم
من إطفائها ومرة يطفئها ومرة يكدر الماء الصافي ومرة يصفي الكدر
فيصح ابن آدم والملك الجبار يدبر من هذه الطبائع فيه بما يشاء فينبغي
أن يكون بصر قلبه طامحا إليه أبدا منتظرا بما يصنع به من تهييجه وتسكينه[٦٢١]
وما كان خارجا منه فتوصل إليه أو منه إلى غيره يشتغل بالنظر إليه عن
النظر إلى من سواه وما سواه فيعرف ربوبيته وقدرته ويكون مرتعدا وجلا
لا يغر أبدا وكما أن الدنيا لا تفرّق حالة حتى ينتقل إلى غيرها من الحالات
خريفا إلى شتاء وشتاء إلى ربيع وربيعا إلى قيظ وقيظا إلى خريف كذلك
له طبائعه الأربع منتقلة من حالة إلى حالة فبحسب ذلك يجب عليه مراقبته
معين وإعداده لكل حالة غيارها واحده أهبها واستعانته بالله الواحد
المعين أن لا يخذله في حالة من الحالات. إن الحكيم تبارك وتعالى تلطف

[621] Al-Tirmidhī uses this pair of terms in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 432.

Folio 5v

١٧ وبدانا في تباركه وتعاليه أحكم بحكمته أمر دنياه وآخرته وسماواته وأرضه

ينظر إلى حكمته فيها أبصار العام فلا يبصرها إلا أبصار الحكماء العلماء[٦٢٢] العقلاء قال

الله تعالى إن في ذلك لآيات لقوم يعقلون[٦٢٣] لآيات لأولي الألباب[٦٢٤] لآيات

٢٠ لأولي الأبصار[٦٢٥] لقوم يتفكرون[٦٢٦] ما يعقلها إلا العالمون[٦٢٧] فمنها ما أدركت

العقول بقدر طاقتها ومنها عجزت من إدراكه فاحتماله لا يجتازها

عن قدرة القادر وتدبير المدبر وكيف تسع قشرة جوزة رمل عالج أم

كيف تستوعب معدة آدمي مياه البحار أم كيف تحيط عينه بما في الدارين

أجمع أم كيف تتضمن صماخ أذنه جميع الأصوات التي في ملكه أم كيف

٢٥ تقبض راحته على كل محسوس أم كيف يحتوي بطنه على كل مأكول

أم كيف تطيق منخراه جميع كل رائحة خلقت أم كيف تصل لهاته إلى

مذاق كل طعم أم كيف تطأ قدماه كل موطئ قلبه الضعيف الذي

كوّن من مضغة رخوة متبدلة متغيرة حقيرة صغيرة متلاشية من ماء

مهين مقدرة تقدير الغفران أبعد عن استدراك علم غير مقدر ولا محدود

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[622] Al-Tirmidhī consistently uses the terms *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars) and *ḥukamāʾ* (sages) in close conjunction. Both of these categories are considered to be *ʿuqalāʾ* (those who possess intelects), the third term used in the sequence here. This is because al-Tirmidhī considers those who are higher in the spiritual hierarchy to be those who are increased in *ʿaql*. Ibid, p. 57.

[623] Qurʾān 2:164, 13:4, 16:12, 16:67, 30:24.

[624] Qurʾān 3:190

[625] Qurʾān 3:13, 24:44. These verses present a different reading *la-ʿibaratan li-ūlī al-abṣār*, "a lesson for those who have inner sight".

[626] Qurʾān 10:24, 13:3, 16:11, 16:69, 30:21, 39:42, 45:13.

[627] Qurʾān 29:43

Folio 6r

١ وتدبير غير متكلف ولا معدود وحكم غير مستفاد و لامولود فسبحان
الذي أحسن كل شيء خلقه[٦٢٨] لم يخلق شيئا عبثا[٦٢٩] ولا يحيطون
به علماً[٦٣٠] وما أوتي العباد من العلم إلا قليلا[٦٣١] إن خالق النور هو خالق الظلمة
وخالق النهار هو خالق الليل وخالق البرد هو خالق الحرّ وخالق
٥ الرطب هو خالق اليابس وإن خالق الحكيم هو خالق العيّ وخالق
العالم هو خالق الجاهل وخالق العاقل هو خالق الأحمق وخالق
المنتبه هو خالق الغافل وخالق الوقور هو خالق الطياش وخالق
الحكيم هو خالق السفيه ولم يخلق من ذلك شيئا عبثاً ولا سهواً عن الإحكام
بوزن الحكمة ولا إهمالا عن الإتقان بوزن التدبير سبحانه عن ذلك وتعالى
١٠ ألم تر إلى سفاهة السفيه جعلت أما لحلم الحليم منها يولد وبها يرضع و
يربى وبلبنها يغذى وبها يصاغ سنخ الحلم وسمعه وبصره ولهاته وبها يصل
الحكيم إلى منافعه ومرافقه فإنه لولا سفاهة السفيه لم يكن للحليم أمّ عنها
يتولد الحلم ويظهر بها. ألا ترى أنه لا يعرف الحليم إلا بالسفيه ولا
يظهر إلا به ولا يحلّ إلا به ألا ترى أن العاقل ظهر بالأحمق وعرف به
١٥ وفتح له سكر عقله من الأحمق ولو كان السكر معدوما لكان فيه عدم

[628] This is a reference to Qurʾān 32:7.
[629] This is a reference to Qurʾān 23:115.
[630] This is a reference to Qurʾān 20:110.
[631] This is a reference to Qurʾān 17:85.

Folio 6r

١٦ العقل ونتج منه خوف زوال العقل وضرورته إلى فعال الحمق ومنزلته
ولو عدم الخوف لكان الأمن يسلبه العقل فيستوي هو بالأحمق وينتج
منه التطوع والتعظيم لخالقه وتعلق القلب به ونتج منه رحمته للأحمق
ودعاءه إلى العقل وإرادة الخير وإنصافه واحتمال ظلمه وجوره والصبر
٢٠ على أذاه وإحسانه إليه مع إساءة الأحمق إليه وستره عليه مع أذاء الأحمق
عليه ونصيحته له مع غش الاحمق له فكل ذلك بسببه أدرك ألا ترى
أنه جعل المذموم للمحمود سبباً وركناً ودعامةً وإنما يولد إحكام الحكيم
أَمَا ترى أن الأنبياء صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين ولدوا من إصلاب الكفرة[٦٣٢]
وأرحام الضلالة مع طهارتهم ونورهم جعل الظلمة سببا لنورهم والنجاسة
٢٥ عنصراً لطهارتهم. أما ترى أن المجاهدين أدركوا منال الجهاد ودرجاته
بالكفار فبالنجس يظهر الطاهر من نجاسته بقدرته إذا مشى الآدمي
على الأرض رأى إحكام ذلك كله وصار محكما بذلك كله إن الأنسان
خلق ظلوما جهولا عجولا بين سباع عادية من الشياطين فجعل الله تعالى
أعداءه سلاحا لوليه به يقاتل سباعه وينجو به منهم وجعلهم حرّاسا

[632] Al-Tirmidhī expresses a similar idea using the same language in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* when he discusses how Muslims were born from the loins (*aṣlāb*) of the unbelievers (*al-kafara*) of Makka. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 92.

Folio 6v

لوليه كم عبداً [...] متمرّد عاتٍ عاصٍ عاند زائغ متعسف ناكب عن
الصراط المستقيم مستدرج مستور عليه أمره عنده وعند العامة
خائز القول عزيز النفس عظيم الشأن قد زيّن له سوء عمله فرآه
حسناً أصبح يعشو عن ذكر الرحمن يقيض له شيطانا فهو له قرين[٦٣٣] وإنهم
ليصدونهم عن السبيل ويحسبون أنّهم مهتدون[٦٣٤] قد جعلهم بحكمته
حراسا[٦٣٥] لوليه يحرسونه من السباع العادية من طريق الأخلاق والشهوات
كلّما أراد سبع منهم مشاورته من الإشتهار والتعرف والرئاسة والانتقام
بالخلق أو التطاول عليهم أو ترهيب النفس إلى ما في أيديهم أو معرفة
خطره وقدره وتعظيم الخلق له فنظر مولاه إلى هذه السباع قد نهضت
من مواضعها وأقبلت نحوه هيّج[٦٣٦] من هذا المستدرج صياحا ونباحا
متتابعا في تشمير وسورة كما تنبح كلاب الغنم عند حسّ السباع وتقاتلها
فلا يزال هذا الحارس المفتون يصيح حتى تفرّ سباعه ولا يزال بها يقاتلها
وينافر بها حتى ينفيها أو يقتلها فصار غنم الأولياء محفوظة بها ترعى[٦٣٧] ساكنة

[633] Qurʾān: 43:36.
[634] Qurʾān: 43:37.
[635] The idea that there are guards (*ḥurrās*) that oppose the enemies (*aʿdāʾ*) of the human being is an idea expressed in *NU*. The guards mentioned in *NU* are different in that they protect the treasures of God's knowledge (*maʿrifa*) from the devils who are enemies. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, pp. 325–326.
[636] This same terminology is used in *NU* to discuss the arousal of the heart by the enemies of the human being. Ibid, p. 326.
[637] Al-Tirmidhī uses the same *mathal* of the shepherd and his flock to describe the *walāya* of the Prophet. Ibid. *Nawādir*, vol. 5, pp. 284–285.

Folio 6v

١٤ مطمئنة في مراعيها كما يحفظ الراعي الشفيق العطوف اللطيف المجدّ
في تشميره للحفظ والحكيم يتلقّى ذلك منه بالسجود له شكرا ومعرفة حاجته
إلى الغنم ليس إلى الكلاب تمسك الكلاب للغنم لا الغنم للكلاب وربّما
أعتم إليهم والسجلة والنقد وبعض الغنم لصياح الكلاب وكرهها إذا
رآها من غير حبسها وغير صورتها وفي غير طبعها وإذا هو في الأصل ضدّها
كسائر أعدائها من السباع إلا أنه جعل هذا الضد حارسا له وسببا لحياته
٢٠ ونجاته بقدره أحكم الحاكمين والغنم غافلة عن هذا ذاهلة إنما تحبّ جنسها
وتسكن إليها حامية عن الكلاب غير مختلطة بها ولا تدري ما جعل لها
من الصلاح فيها فتبارك الله أحسن الخالقين فالحكيم عرف لطفه فيما أدرك
من تدبيره وما عجز عن إدراكه وانتفع بكل شيء وهو كالملك الكبير
الغني ذي الضياع الفاشية والأموال الكثيرة وكل أولئك له ضياع
٢٥ يجهل الإنزال منها ولكلّ نوع من الإنزال عنده وعاء يجعله فيه حتى يضبط
ملكه وإنّ في كل واحد من هؤلاء من الأحمق والفاسد والظالم والأبله
والكفور والطياش وغيرهم له نزل ونوع مدخل منه لا يدخل من غيره
فهو يتعاهد ضياعه ويرقها ويحرّرها ويحرّر[٦٣٨] ما يدخل له منها ولا يكون

[638] Here we have the connection discussed in Chapter 1 of the dissertation about the connection between freedom (*ḥurriyya*) and *walāya*. The sage (*ḥakīm*), as one type of saint (*walī*) is like a king who can enslave and free others as he chooses.

Folio 6v

٢٩ كالفقير الذي لا يملك شبرا من الأرض ولم يلزمه شغل ذلك ولا له وعاء

Folio 7r

إن تنصروا الله ينصركم ويثبت أقدامكم[٦٣٩] ولينصرنّ[٦٤٠] الله من ينصره ورسله
بالغيب إنّ الله قويّ عزيز لا تخف إنّك أنت الأعلى[٦٤١] وألق ما في يمينك تلقف
ما صنعوا[٦٤٢] إلى قوله أسمع وأرى فأتياه[٦٤٣] إلى قوله سيرتها الآية وإن يمسسك الله بضرّ
فلا كاشف له إلا هو إلى قوله الرحيم[٦٤٤] أنت مضطر إلى [...][٦٤٥] في كل طرفة عين
وأقلّ أو أكثر اضطرارا تاما غير ناقص والخلق كلهم تميّز مراقي الضرورة إليه أهل
السموات والأرض لا أحد أغنى عنه من أحد بشيء ولا أحد أقل ضرورة إليه من آخر
ولا أحد أغنى عنه في دون وقت ولا أحد سواه إلا و هو مجبول على الاضطرار
إليه ولا مجبول على الاضطرار إليه إلا وهو مضطر إليه في معرفة ضرورته إليه في كل
وقت فالعبد كالمعلق به في جو الهواء يده في يد ممسك له فالعبد غير مضطر
إلى الجو لأنه في الجو وهو مضطر أبدا إلى يد ممسكه لأنه إن أرسل تعطيلا (هطيلا)
فذهب ضرورته طرفة عين فهو مضطر إليه بظاهره وباطنه وحركاته وسكناته
أشد من كل شيء هو يرى نفسه مضطرا إليه ومحتاجا إليه فأحذر الكلام
واستعن بالله فإنه يجر كثير المهالك و المعاطب من فرحه ونشاطه وعجبه

[639] Qurʾān: 47:7.
[640] Al-Tirmidhī blends two verses of the Qurʾān most probably by accident since they both resemble each other. These are 22:40 and 57:25.
[641] Qurʾān: 20:68.
[642] Qurʾān: 20:69.
[643] Qurʾān: 20:46–47.
[644] Qurʾān: 10:107.
[645] It looks like the word could be عين but this does not make sense in the context of the passage.

Folio 7r

١٤ وريائه وافتخاره وترك القيام به وترك وفائه وما يجلب إلى صاحبه من الاستطالة
على من فوقه أعني كلام الصواب والعظة والذكر فكل ذلك من آفاته وكل واحدة
منها تخر مطر بالعطب إلا أن يناله رحمة الرحيم ثم أن يخلص من آفات
الكلام[٦٤٦] فإن المتكلم مقدر لما يفتي بها الملك ومقتدر لتقدير أموره وتدبير
أعماله فكيف يجتري أن يقدر أو يهتدي أو يدبر من أعماله على مقدار عظمته
وملكه وكيف يرى نفسه يصلح لذلك فعسى أن يقدم مؤخرا أو يؤخر مقدما
٢٠ أو يزيد على المقدار أو ينقص منه فيفسد أمره كان البصير من الرجال في
حرفة إذا كلف تدبير عمل ملك من ملوك الأرض فيما له بصر هاب ذلك وجنب
عنه وهاله مخافة أن لا يقع منه بالموافقة فكيف بتدبير أمر ملك السماوات
والأرض وجاعل المقادير وصانع التدابير والعارف بكل ذلك والمتعالي
بنفسه عن الخلل والفساد أم كيف يطمع نفس الغافل من أن يكون ترجمانا
٢٥ لهذا الملك العظيم وناقدا له ومدبرا لأمره وأن يكون منها يصلح لذلك أو يستحقه
مع صغره في عظمته وجهالته في علمه وسفالته في علوه ونجاسته
في طهارته وسخافته في حكمته ولومته في كرمه كيف طمع أو يصلح الصغير
أن يكون مدبرا لأمر العظيم والجاهل مدبرا لأمر العالم والغني

[646] This is an example of where al-Tirmidhi criticizes Kalām (theology) and likens the *mutakallim* (theologian) to a minister of a king who changes the wording of the king's rulings.

Folio 7r

٢٩ مدبرا لأمر الطاهر والسخيف مدبرا لأمر الحكيم والذميم مدبرا لأمر الكريم

Folio 7v

إن آفة الحريص على البر ترك التواضع للسائل الحريص على جمع المعاش
متواضع في سؤاله يضع بالكسرة والحبة ولا يكاد يرغب في الرغيف الصحيح
والدرهم الوافي متواضعا بنفسه عن استحقاق ذلك واستعظاما للدرهم
والرغيف و [...] لهما عن قدره فإن أعطي ذلك شكره عليه على قدر إجلاله
عن قدرته وعلم إن صنع إليه من المعروف ما لم يكن منزلته يبلغ والمستغني
في نفسه يبغض بحرص الدنيا حريصا على جمع الحطام فإن أعطي ما يعظم
عليه السائل الشاكر تتعجب منه إجلالا له أسخطه لما يرى نفسه أرفع
منزلة منه وإن أعطي غاية منيته لم يعظم عليه شكره لما يقدم طمعه
فيه ورأى نفسه مستحقاً له وربما عظم منه الفرح لبلوغه منيته
فظن أن عظم الفرح عظم الشكر فخدع فهذا تفسير أول المسأله فلا تحدث
بالكلام[٦٤٧] نفسك فإن أدنى ما أخشى عليك خصلتين وفي كل واحدة منهما
آفة أحدهما أن لا تأخذ الكلام منه فتوديه إليه ولا يردك عنه فيه من عند
مبتداه إلى آخره والأخرى أن لا يحلّه عن تدبيرك أمره فيكون ذلك استصغارا
لعظمته وكلاهما مضرة بالحكمة[٦٤٨] محشوّة بالآفة أما علمت أنّه ينبغي للمتكلّم
إذا ابتلى فاضطرّ إليه أن يكون نظره إليه واستخراج الكلام من عنده

[647] This represents further criticism of Kalām.
[648] Theology (Kalām) is contrast here to wisdom (*ḥikma*).

Folio 7v

١٦ قبل ابتدائه فيه بنظر ما يعطيه وما يجري على لسانه وإن عرض له
قبل ذلك علم ينبغي أن يعرض عليه قبل أن ينفرد به ويضطر إليه فيه
كأنه يقول يرضى أو لا يرضى يصلح أو لا يصلح في هذا الوقت أو في غير هذا
الوقت يراد فيه زيادة أو نقصان تأخير أو تقديم ما يراد فيه وما لا
٢٠ يراد فيه ثم لا يجعل لأحد غيره فيه نصيبا إلى أخره في شيء من الأشياء
ثم يكون خائفاً أن يكون دخله حال لم يعلمه ويعلم أنه قد أصابته توبته
من القيام بأمره فكيف ينبغي أن يكون دخوله فيه وإحكامه إياه وفراغه
منه وعرضه عليه وجوابه له عند سؤاله إياه عنه وترك خيانته له فيه في
ترك اللهو فيه ومتى يكون كلامك على هذا المقدار وإلى
٢٥ هذا المقدار من [...] ما يستحقه بعظمته وتعرفه بحكمته وكل ما أوصيتك
به لا تطبقه إلا به [...] أعانك عليه وصنع لك فيه وإنما تفعله تفضلا
وتطولا منه لا أنك تستحقه لشيء من كان أو يكون منك ولكن برحمته إلي
ابتداءك بها فضلا منه وكرما وجودا وتجاوزا وإحسانا وإن خذلك
فبعدله[٦٤٩] وقد كنت مستحقا له البتة وبما لم تساهل غيرك ولم يصلح لسواه

[649] Here al-Tirmidhī states that were God to forsake one then it would be out of his justice. This perspective is consistent with Ḥanafī theological viewpoints.

Folio 8r

لسواه ومن قبل نفسك أتيت وأنت الملوم عليه ورحمته أوسع وإحسانه
أسبق فنعم الرب ولبئس العبد وأحذر الصحبة[٦٥٠] أشد الحذر وضعها
موضع العطب فيكون حذرك منه لحذرك من العطب اليقين. فإنك قد
جربتها ورأيتها ورأيت آفاتها وما حل بك من أجلها وما عوفيت
مما ابتلي غيرك فيها بألوان البلاء وكيف أهلك نفسه واستدرج وخدع
بها فلا تأمنها بعد ما رأيت وتواضع لربك لمعرفة ضعف نفسك عن
طاقتها أما رأيت قد أصابتك من نكباتها إن استقبلتك منها مخافة
أذهبت منك خوف الله وحياء أذهب حياء الله وطمع أذهب طمعك
فيما عند الله وهيبة أذهبت هيبة الله وجلال أذهب جلال الله
وتعظيم أذهب تعظيم الله أبعد هذا العين يخدع مع أنك ضعيف في كل
الأحوال إلا بقوة الله مخذول إلا بنصرة الله جاهل إلا بتعليم الله مائل
إلا بتسديد الله ثم إنك إن صحبك من يريد الانتفاع بك ولم يفيد بك ولم يقتصر
على رأيك ولم يخلّك جرت ورعت وأضمرت له العداوة والخشونة وحكمت
عليه خلاف ما حكمت على نفسك واشتدت لا يمنك فيما يأتي مثله كثيرا
ولم تر ضعفه ولا ينطو على رحمته ولم يتمسك بالنظر إلى قدرة الله جل

[650] The topic of companionship (*suḥba*) is important in al-Tirmidhī's mystical framework. One of the chapters of his *NU* is titled, "The Etiquette of Companionship." Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 45.

Folio 8r

سلطانه وعظم كبرياءه و أخذه بنواصي العباد واستعماله إياهم ولم تخف
على نفسك مثل ما رأيت منه من التقصير ولم يمتلئ قلبك من الشكر والخوف
وإن اقتدى بك فعسى أن يكون اقتداؤه في أمر ركبت فيه الهوى أو شبيه
بالهوى أوسننت فيه سنة غير صحيحة أو أنت فيه مغرور فتحمل وزره مع
وزر نفسك ثم ترى نفسك له متضيقا في وقت من الآفات أو حال من الأحوال
وإذا ابتليت بالصحبة من غير تكلف منك فإياك أن يحملك خوف هذه
الآفات بعد على ترك ما يلزمك من إقامتك على العدل فيها وفرارك منها
مكابره أو جورك فيها وتبدل أمر مولاك أو قلة نظرك إلى ما حملك واستقبلك به
وجرئك وغفلتك عن قدرته عليك فيها وفيما هو خارج منها واستخراجه المنفعة
من سبب النصرة والمضرة من تسببه المنفعة أو منك بذلك إلى اختيار شيء دون
شيء دون أن يكون مثل قلبك إليه وإلى قدرته وموافقته والقول في أمره وكن كمحترف
ألقي إليه الملك ثوبا من ثيابه أو متاعا من أمتعته كلفه إصلاحها فكن أحد رجلين
إما رجل استعان به على القيام بالعدل في ذلك وعزم عليه أو رأى رجل
ضعف نفسه عن ذلك فتضرع إليه واضطر إليه في تخليصه من شره من أن يكون

مختارا لشيء لأنه لا تدري فيما خيّر له العبيد ثلاثة في الدخول في أمر مولاه
والخروج منه أحدهم قد أختار هواه فلبس يدخل ولا يخرج إلا بهواه فقد
خسر وأبق من مولاه وتمرد عليه والآخر يدخل بخوف ورجاء
فيستقيم ويميل و هو بين الضر والنفع والآخر يدخل بالموافقة لايريبه
من الأمر إلا موافقته فهو السابق المقدم فخوفه من زاوله عن موافقته وهربه
من هرب نفسه عن موافقة مولاه إلى اختيارها ثم يرجعون من عند
المولى عند فراغهم من العمل على ثلاثة أوجه فواحد يرجع بالسخطة سخط
عليه ربه وهو راكب للهوى وآخر يكون رجوعه بالعفو ولعل أكثر ذلك
الذي يدخل بالخوف والرجاء يثاب على استقامته ويعفى عن مثله. وآخر
يكون رجوعه بالرضى من مولاه وعسى أن يكون أكثر ذلك من دخل بالموافقة لأن
صاحب الموافقة يكون عزمه على ما يرضى فيهجم على ما طلب ويحصد ما زرع
ويكون صاحب الخوف والرجاء على النجاة فيهجم على ما طلب ويحصد ما زرع صاحب
الموافقة لا تطيب نفسه بشيء دون ارتكاب هواه العبيد ثلاثة عبد أبق
وعبد يغل على مولاه وعبد خادم قام على رأس مولاه فأما الأبق فقد
تمرد على مولاه وركب هواه فعاقبته الأخذ والقيد والطوق والضرب
والحبس والبلاء وأما المغل سلم إلى حرفة من الحرف وعلم وجهها و
أعطى التها وبيّن له ما يراد منه من الغلة وأشرف عبيد الغلة وأحسنهم

Folio 8v

أداء للغلة[٦٥١] في توفيرها ومبادرتها وتطييبها وأكثرهم تواضعا لمولاه
وتملقا وتقربا بألوان النسب وسداد ما يقربه إلى مولاه كله على
وجهين في عمله على إقامة الربوبية لربه وإقامة العبودية لنفسه فإذا
أقام الربوبية لربه رأى قوامه كله بيده في مصالحه ومنافعه وتوكل عليه
وإذا أقام العبودية لنفسه والى توجيه عليه وعمله كله إلى مولاه وتواضع
له فهو متواضع له مضطر إليه فهذا إحكام عمله وحصنه وأداته وأما
الخادم فليس له خدمة معلومة نصيب بالخدمة لمولاه والخدمة مختلفة أمرها
مرة يأمره بلطف ومرة يأمره بجفا ومرة بالشدة ومرة باللين ومرة بالعطا
ومرة بالحرمات ومرة يكون قائما ومرة قاعدا وهو غير منسوب إلى عمل سوى
الخدمة والخدمة أحوالها مختلفة وأمره كله على الأدب أدب يكون بينه وبين مولاه
فإنه لا يصلح للخدمة إلا الأديب الظريف النظيف الخفيف إذا تكلم تكلم
بوزن وإذا سكت سكت بهيبة وإن جلس جلس متواضعا وإن وقف

[651] In *NU* al-Tirmidhī uses the same configuration of types of slaves. The farm or agricultural slaves (*ghulla*) are likened to the Jews while the house slaves (*khadam*) are likened to the Muslims. Ibid, p. 99.

Folio 9r

١ وقف منتظرا وإن دعى أسرع الإجابة وإن عمل أتقن العمل فقد ترك
جميع حوائجه وحوائج غيره لحاجة الخدمة فليست له حاجة سواها ولا عمل
سواه لا يعرف منه سعي لنفسه سواه ولا لغيره كسعي غيره من العبيد المغلين
والأبقين[٦٥٢] فإنه في كنف مولاه في بيته و مطبخه وعلى مائدته وبين يديه
٥ يتعاهده مولاه بما يرى من مصالحه ويستعمله بما يشاء من أموره ويرينه
بما يشاء من دنيته التي لا يرين بها أحدا من عبيده وسداد أمره كله على أربعة
أوجه على الأنتظار والاستيذان وبعد الاضطرار والتواضع فهو لا يعمل
عملا صغيرا أو كبيرا إلا باستئذان أو انتظار بعد استكمال درجة الاضطرار
والتواضع من نحو كلمة أو سكتة أو قيام أو قعود أو أكل أو شرب أو حركة
١٠ أو سكون[٦٥٣] أو نظرة أو رفع أو وضع لأنه لا يكون للخادم إلا ذلك لأنه
خداع السيد كفاحا وذلك بقلبه فهو منتظر ما يحنّه من سيده وإن أراد
أمرا استأذنه ويرى نفسه مضطرا إليه في جميع أحواله ويتواضع
عن أن يكون وضع نفسه في موضع ليس له بأهل من اختياره لنفسه
أو اختياره لأمر رفيع فإن كان فيه مرضاة مولاه لإنه لا يدري يصلح
١٥ هو له أم لا يصلح له أو يراد لذلك العمل خادم أرفع منه ولا يبلغ قدره

[652] For the similar analogy of the runaway slave (*ābiq*) see *NU*: Ibid, p. 326.
[653] Movement (*ḥaraka*) and stillness (*sukūn*) are two opposites used by the Pythagoreans in their list of primary opposites.

Folio 9r

١٦ وخطره ذلك العمل فهو يتواضع فيه شفيعا منكسرا و يستأذن إن
أراد الدخول له ذلك ويرى نفسه مضطرا إليه في دخوله كيف يدخله
في أي وقت ومع أي شيء وبأي شيء يرى نفسه جاهلا في ذلك كله
ويراد له الدخول فيه أم لا ويتواضع عن أن يعمل عملا يكون العز فيه لغير
٢٠ مولاه فإن غفل عن شيء من ذلك أو نزل فيه رأى خذلانه من مولاه ورأى في
ذلك منه عدلا ورأى نفسه له أهلا فاضطر إليه في إقالته متواضعا
في ذلك أنه يطلب أمرا ليس له بأهل مستحسنا منه لما صنع من حقه
وارتكب من آذاه ولما أنه يطلب ما ليس له بأهل فإن وقف على شيء
من أمور الخدمة رأى ذلك فضلا من ربه عليه ولا يرى نفسه له أهلا
٢٥ البتة على حال لما عرف من لومه ونجاسته وكفرانه وجهالته و
معصيته وما عرف من عظمة مولاه وجلالة خطره وطهارته وارتفاعه
عن الأقذار والأنجاس فهو في السيئة مضطر متواضع وفي الحسنة
منتظر مستأذن وهو ما صار إليه من الخير قليلا كان أو كثيرا يعلم أنه
كان أهلا له وهو عدل من ربه عليه ليعرفه جبروته فهو جبار فهو لا أبدا

Folio 9v

أبدا إلا فضله ولا يخشى أبدا إلا عدله ثم هو في جميع أحواله لا يخلو من فضله وإن أصابه عدله لأنه إن وقع في عدل الزلة تضامن مولاه عليه في الزلة والخوف منها فضل والتواضع منه فيها فضل وأمره معاتبته وهو يعامل ويعامل على العنان فربما بين له في الباطن وربما بين له في الظاهر عند انتظاره واستيذانه وحركاته وعمله والظاهر مما يمضئه أو يصده من أسباب الإمضا والصد وربما ترك في خيرة ويزداد له فيها أيضا تواضع واضطرار فإن أمر مولاه على التؤدة والإناة والهيبة والجبروت فلا ينبغي أن يكون طياشا مستعجلا قال جل وعز لا تعجل بالقرآن من قبل أن يقضى إليك وحيه وقل ربِّ زدني علماً[٦٥٤] وقال قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء فلنولينك قبلة ترضاها[٦٥٥] وقال ولقد نعلم أنك يضيق صدرك بما يقولون[٦٥٦] إلى آخره السورة وما كان منه في شأن الإفك وسؤال أصحاب الكهف إن الذين جاءوا بالإفك عصبة منكم[٦٥٧] ولا تقولن لشيء إني فاعل ذلك غدا إلا أن يشاء الله[٦٥٨] وفي أمر يعقوب مع يوسف عليهما السلام وفي أمره مع ولده حين دعوه وإجاتبه بعد عشرين ومائة

[654] Qurʾān: 20:114.
[655] Qurʾān: 2:144.
[656] Qurʾān: 15:97.
[657] Qurʾān: 24:11.
[658] Qurʾān: 18:23.

Folio 9v

١٥ سنة أو نحو ذلك وفي أمر النبوة وقصور الوحي مدة وما أظهر من آياته
في كل شيء من أمر السحاب والمطر والأشجار وخلق الإنسان والدواب
والطيور وغيرهم من جميع أموره فهذا في الظاهر وأما الباطن فيصير
بمنزلة ينظر بنور الله ويرمي بسهم الله فلا يخطئ فينبغي له قبل ذلك أن
يلقي همّ نفسه الذي يكون منه إشعاله في مصداده وتدبيره وتقديمه
٢٠ وتأخيره لأن له همّا يحمله على هذه الأشياء من نحو ما يريد من الصلاح في
أمر والفساد في أمر أو الهون في أمر أو الطمع في أمر والمنفعة في أمر
أو النصر في أمر وهو مقداره الذي يقدره على التجريد والتجريد يجربه
الخلق فإن الخلق عامتهم يمضون على التجربة[٦٥٩] كنحو ما يأكل الإنسان فيشبع
ويكتسب فيجمع ويلبس فيدفئ ويتقي فتوقى ويطلب فيعطى ويؤذي
٢٥ فيؤذى ويكرِم فيكرَم ويهرب فينجو ونحو ذلك وهي تجربة فقد وقعت
العامة عليها وجبنوا عن إلقائها وهو السبب فالخادم ينبغي له أن
يجاوز السبب إلى المسبب[٦٦٠] والتجربة إلى المجرّب والمقدار إلى المقدر لأن
له مقدارا سوى مقدار الخلق الذي أعطاهم من قبل التجربة ومقداره
خلاف مقدار العبيد لأنه يخرج المنفعة من سبب المضرة عند الخلق والمضرة

[659] Experimention (*tajriba*) is considered an important aspect of *ḥikma* in al-Tirmidhī's *NU*. Ibid. *Nawādir* 1972, p. 224.
[660] Al-Tirmidhī calls God *musabbib al-asbāb* (the causer of causes) in *NU*. Ibid, p. 17.

Folio 10r

الكساحة والكناسة والكثيب ومواضع قيامه وقعوده ومضجعه
ومبيته فيأخذ بأيدي الناس ويطوف بهم على هذه الأشياء فهذه منه
طيش وسرف وعبث كبير وذلك أنه اطلع الناس على عورته وبين
لهم حد هلكته وفلكه فصار المتحير فيه عارفا به فإذ أعرفه مكانة ملكه وأسره
وصار السارق قد وجد مساغاً إلى السرقة مما في خزاتنه وصار العدو
قد اطلع على عورته ووجد السبيل إلى موضع الشماتة به وصار المتجني
عليه قد وجد السبيل إلى ما يعتبه به وصار الولي إلى أنه قد اطلع
على أمرين ما يوافقه وما يكرهه فإن كان مما يحبه ويوافقه يطمع
منه فيه فإن لم يجد يذمه وهذا الملك يلزمه إنصافه فيه وإن كان مما
يكرهه يزداد بذلك الملك برده عنه ويزداد الصديق زهدا فيه
وصار النظير يحسده على ما يرى عنده من النفيس الغالي ويهاون به
على ما يرى عنده من الخسيس الرديء والمكروه والعيب ثم الملك الذي
فوقه يتباهى إليه ذلك الخير منه فيقتدرانه ويخطبه في أمره لأن ذلك
ليس من منزلة الملوك و منفعتهم ويوشك أن يسخطه ذلك منه
فيعزله فيقول أنت لا تعرف تدبير الملك ومن فتح له طريق المعرفة
فكأنه أسند إليه الملك وقلد تدبيره وطلب منه سيرة الملوك في
وقارهم وكتمان أسرارهم وعلمهم وحلمهم وطرفهم ومداراتهم وترك

Folio 10r

الخفة والطيش والصلف والنزق والسفه فإن هذه كلها فعال
من دونهم ولا يصلح لهم شيء من ذلك فالعارف ملك الجبار تبارك اسمه
هو الذي ملكه وليس فوقه ملك غيره الجبار تبارك اسمه صيّره دونه
فهو محتاج إلى أداة الملوك فالحلم بيته ومنزله وقصره الذي يستر
على عورته ويكنّه من الحرّ والبرد وينظر الناس إلى حسنه وبهائه وتشييده
وشرفه ونقشه وإحكامه لا يزالون يطوفون حوله وينظرون إليه فلا بدّ
للملك من هذا القصر فمن نظر من خارجه حار بصره وتعجّب ومن نظر من
داخله كلّ لسانه عن وصف ما فيه من بيوته وحدائقه وأنواع شجره وخضره
ورياحينه من طرفه وحكمته وعقله ووزن الأمور بميزان العدل
والفصل فيه والعقل سيفه الذكي الحسام المقصص في وبيضه و
بريقه وأفرنده وحدّته وجودته يدبر به أمر معيشته ودينه وكلاهما له
واحد والعلم مصباحه وشمعه في ضيائه ونوره في الليالي المظلمة يستضيء

Folio 10v

به في أموره والعمل نزله الذي يدخل عليه من ضياعه من أنواع الحبوب
التي يعجز عن مثله من سواه واللبس لباسه الذي يقيه الحرّ والبرد ويواري
عورته ويطهر به حاله من حسن لباسه ورفعته ونفاسته وعظم خطره الذي
لا يجد غيره مثله ولا ينسج مثله إلا له وبان به ممن دونه وعرف به ملكه
حين نظر إليه وعرفه به من له يعرفه والورع مجلسه الذي يجلس فيه كما
سعى لمثله من نظافته وطهارته وكنسه وتطهيره عن كل قذر وقذى
وتدخينه بالريح الطيبة وألوان بسطه ووسائده التي يجمل بها والصدق
مركبه في حسنه وجماله ومطاوعته وانقياده الذي لا يصلح إلا به والصبر
حصنه الذي يتحصن به وحرزه الذي يتحرز به من عدوه ويمكن فيه هو وحشمه
وأهله وماله فينجيه من الآفات والنكبات إذا ما رامه عدوه والرفق
تاجه الذي يبرق كالشمس الطالعة على رأسه وينال شعاعه كل من
نظر إليه أو جلس إليه أو استقبله من ولي أو عدوّ ولا يمنع شعاعه من أحد
مما فيه من الجواهر النفيسة واليواقيت السنية واللآلي الرفيعة والدر
والمرجان والذهب والفضة وقد بين به عزه وفخره وبهاؤه وسلطانه
وكمل به ملكه إن الملك يفرش له في مائة بيت وهو يبيت منها في
فراش واحد وإنما يريد بذلك كيلا يعرف أين مبيته وفي أي فراش
هو من كتمان أمره حال الملوك ليس كحال غيرهم وعليهم من المؤنة ما ليس

Folio 10v

١٨ على غيرهم إن الملك متواضع للذي مكله وأجلسه مجلسه مضطر إليه متحرٍّ
مرضاته إن جفاه شكره وإن جاءه منه مكروه أو عزله أسره فيما بينه وبينه
٢٠ متواضعا مذعناً لا يبث ذلك ولا يشكو إلى أحد يريد بذلك راحة نفسه
وإنعاما لربه من النفل وإن ضاق به ذرعاً يرى مليكه من نفسه تواضعا
وخشوعا وانقيادا يعلم أنه لا يحبه محبوب أو مكروه إلا منه ليس عليه مسلط
غيره فإن سلط عليه أحد فهو من عنده وإن جاءته كرامة من أحد فهي من عنده
يتحمل من أمره كل ما تطيقه وإن جاء ما يقدحه ويعجز عن طاقته وعن
٢٥ احتماله لا يحتال لإلقائه فيكون تهاونا به على قدر ذلك ولكن يرغب إليه
في تحقيقه عنه لا يجعل حيلته إلا ذلك على حياء منه ومهابة له ووجل منه
فعلامة حلمه وهو قصره المشيّد المزخرف كما قال الحكيم وهب بن منبّه[٦٦١] رحمه الله
إنه يتشعب ويظهر منه عشرة أخلاق الوقار والهنيء والعفاف والحياء
والدعة والركون والكرم والخشوع والإنابة والسكينة وعلامة عقله

[661] Al-Tirmidhī titles Wahb b. Munabbih as *al-ḥakīm* or "The Sage" on account of him being a major transmitter of Biblical lore into Arabic.

Folio 11r

من سبب المنفعة عند الخلق والصلاح من سبب الفساد عند الخلق
والفساد من سبب الصلاح عند الخلق والحرمان من موضع الطمع عند الخلق
والمنالة من موضع اليأس عند الخلق والكرامة من موضع الهوان عند الخلق
والهوان من موضع الكرامة عند الخلق ونحو ذلك مما يطول ويكثر تفسيره
فإذا ألقى العبد مقداره هاله ذلك واستقبله تجربة لإنه يلقى سبب
منافعه فيسرف به على المضرة كأنه يقال له قد ألفيت المنفعة فلا بد
من المضرة وقد ألفيت المحبوب فلا بد من المكروه ويراد منه شجاعة عند ذلك
وجسارة ومضى فإن كان ذلك يوجد منه فقد صح له الظاهر والباطن ووصل
إلى جميع أمنيته إن شاء الله عز وجل وإن كان أمر إبراهيم صلوات الله عليه في
الذبح والنار وأمر موسى صلوات الله عليه حين أمر أن يأتي البحر فيأخذ فيه
وأمر يوشع بن نون في حبس الشمس وأمر محمد صلوات الله عليه في سراقه بن
جعشم ويراد له الحسارة قتل عثمان الصنع قال الله تعالى "الذين يؤمنون
بالغيب" واعتبر بأمر موسى صلوات الله في ذلك كله حيث قال "وما
تلك بيمينك يا موسى قال هي عصاي أتوكأ عليها وأهش بها على غنمي
ولي فيها مآرب أخرى[٦٦٢] وكانت العصا مقداره وهمته وفيها حوائجه كما
ذكر وفسر قال ألقها يا موسى فإذا هي حية تسعى فهذه التي كانت فيها

[662] Qurʾān: 20:17.

Folio 11r

١٧ منافع موسى وحوائجة صارت بعد إلقائه ثعبانا هائلا فظيعاً عيناه

يتوقدان نارا ونابه يصرف يبتلع الصخرة العظيمة وتبلغ الشجرة العظيمة من

أصلها وصار موسى إلى فزع منه وخوف وهول وفرار ولم يكن له طاقة

٢٠ الوقوف معها بعدما كانت تعينه وفيها مرافقة وحوائجه وقال تعالى

ولّى مدبرا ولم يعقّب يا موسى[٦٦٣] لا تخف إنك من الآمنين[٦٦٤] خذها ولا تخف سنعيدها

سيرتها الأولى[٦٦٥] فلما وثق بقوله وصدق بوعده ومدّ يده إلى هول لم ير

الراؤون مثله وفظيعة لم ينظر الناظرون إلى مثلها وخطر لم يجسر

الجاسرون عليه فصدق بوعده فيه وسرائره فأعادها سيرتها الأولى

٢٥ وجعل فيها لموسى صلوات الله عليه من المرافق والمنافع والعز والبرهان

والسلطان ما دامت فيه مرافقه الأولى التي كانت قبلها وحوائجه التي

كانت إليها وكل واحد همّه فيها مقدار أموره وحوائجه كما كانت حوائج

موسى إلى عصاه والله أعلم فهو مدعوّ إلى إلقائها إن كانت من أهل الخدمة

ويكلف التحول من مقداره إلى مقدار مولاه فإذا ألقاها رأى في إلقائه

663 Missing from this verse is *aqbil wa*, "come forward and."
664 Qurʾān: 28:31.
665 Qurʾān: 20:21.

Folio 11v

من الهول والفظاعة كنحو ما رأى موسى صلوات الله عليه في الحية وجعل
له إلقاءها كالحية إن شاء الله والله يعلم لأنه يستقبله هول من الناس
إذا ذهب مقدار مداهنتهم ومداراتهم وهول الدنيا إذا ذهب مصالحها
وهول النفس مقدار تعاهدها ويرى من الفظاعة في إلقاء المقدار ما
يهوله ويهول كل سامع وناظر من الناس فإذا قبض على هذا الهول
وهي الحية سكن له جأشه ومات خوفه وفزعه وهو إعادتها إلى سيرتها
الأولى وصار له سلطان وعز وملك ومنافع لم يكن في الأول وخضعت
له الرقاب وذلّت له الصعاب وطفت له النيران المشتعلة وسكنت
له الأمواج المعقلة وتحوّلت الهيبة والفزع والخوف عنه إلى غيره
من الجبرارة والملوك والأكابر وذوي الأخطار كلما ألقى عصاه تلك
أو نظروا إلى شخصه أو سمعوا بذكره فحينئذ يصفو له الباطن والظاهر
إن شا الله فإذا صفا أمره كان مولاه مشتغله كما قال كنت سمعه الذي
يسمع به وبصره الذي يبصر ويده التي يبطش بها ومعقد قلبه وقوة يديه
ورجليه فإذا كان كذلك جميع أمره في مشيه وقيامه وقعوده وكلامه
وسكونه على الإصابة قال جل وعلا فأما من أعطى واتقى وصدق
بالحسنى فسنيسّره لليسرى[٦٦٦] أعطى حقوق الله واتقى محارم الله وصدق

[666] Qurʾān: 92:5.

Folio 11v

١٧ بموعود الله قال الله ومن يتق الله يجعل له من أمر يسراً[٦٦٧] ومخرجاً
وفرقاناً فإذا كان خادماً لربه وكان ربه مستعملاً له لا تشبه سيرته
ومذهبه وأموره سيرة غيره ومذهب غيره وأمور غيره لأن كلامه علم معلوم
٢٠ يوصف به و ينسب إليه وهذا ليس له عمل معلوم ممن لم يكن في درجته لا يقدر
أن يعرفه أو يؤمر بأمره أما إن يتحير فيه أو ينسبه إلى ضلاله أو جنون
أو أمر منكر لأنه لا يرى لأمره مقدارا ولا وجها ولا سببا وذلك لأنه قد
ترك مقداره وسبب الطاقة فهو يستعمله فيما يشاء فلا يشبه استعماله
استعمال غيره ليس من يستعمله كمن يستعمل نفسه لمولاه في حرفته ألا ترى
٢٥ إلى استعماله للسحاب كيف يستعمل ربما يبطئ به في مقدار الخلق حتى
يستبطئوه ويقولوا قد جاء أوانه ودكّ جنّ المطر إلا أنهم لا يقدرون أن
يلوموا أحداً لأنهم لا يرون له مستعملا غيره ولو رأوا للاموه وتذمّروا منه
ووقعوا فيه فإذا أنشأ السحاب فتجمع قزعاً من أمطار السماء فيركمها
ويمسكها يوما ويومين وثلاثة أيام وأقل وأكثر ثم يفرقها ولا يوشك منها

[667] Qurʾān: 65:4.

Folio 12r

وهو سيفه القاطع عشرة أخلاق يتشعب التفهم والنفقة والتعلم والتفكر
والحيلة والأوبة والاعتبار والتدبر والانزجار والتيكل وعلامة علمه وهو مصباحه
المضيء عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه العلم لما يحب الله وما يكره وما أحلّ
وما حرّم وكيف نهى وكيف حدوده وسننه وفرائضه وما طاعته
وعلامة العمل وهو نزله عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه الصلاة والزكاة و
الصيام والجهاد وإصلاح ذات البين وأداء الأمانة والعدل في
الحكم وإقامة الشهادة ومعاونة أهل الحق والتمسك بما يقعد عن المسئلة
في أمر المعيشة وعلامة اللين وهو لباسه الجميل عشرة أخلاق يتشعب
منه يعفو عن المسيء ويدفع بالتي هي أحسن ويعفو عمّن ظلمه ولا ينهر
من سأله ولا يبرم من جالسه ولا يغضب على من أراد أن يغضبه ولا يشادّ
من فوقه ولا يحقر من دونه ولا يتعاطا ما ليس له ولا يعجل ذا حاجة حاجته
وعلامة الورع وهو مجلسه عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه يورّع لسانه
عن الكذب وبطنه عن الحرام وفرجه من الزنا ورعيته من الشحّ
وغضبه من العدوان ورهبته من الفتنة وشهوته من اللهو وهواه
من الباطل وفرحه من البطر وحزنه من الجزع وعلامة الصدق
وهو مركبه الشريف عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه يصدق من استرهبه ومن
أرغبه ومن وعد ومن عاهد ومن أسرّ إليه ومن أئتمنه ومن استشاره

Folio 12r

ومن رافقه ومن فارقه ومن استأجره وعلامة الصبر وهو حصنه الحصين
عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه يصبر نفسه في الرخاء فلا يطغيه وعند الصلاة
يخلصها وعند الزكاة فلا يبخل لها وعند الصوم فلا يفسده بالمعصية و
عند الشهوة فلا يعونه وعند الرغبة فلا يرديه وعند الغضب فلا يخرجه
عن الحق وعند الرضى فلا يدخله في الباطل وفي تغلّب الزمان فلا يحوّله
عن الدين وعلامة الرفق وهو تاجه العزيز الباهي الزاهر المهيب
الجليل عشرة أخلاق يتشعب منه إن أحسن لم يمنن بإحسانه وإن أحسن
إليه محسن شكر له وإن أساء إليه مسيء غفر له وإن أساء إلى أحد أعرف
وإن خاصمه مخاصم أنصفه وإن يخصمه الخصم عدل له وإن حاوره من يريد
جلاله أفهم إن فهم أو صمت له وإن ضاق يصاحبه خلق وويتبع له وإن
دعاه داعٍ إلى نصح أجابه وإن سأله ما لم يعلم فتح له فهذه أداة ملكه
لا يستقيم ملكه إلا بذلك ولا يجد إلا عند امتنّ عليه فإن أعطاه عهد الملك

Folio 12v

وهو المعرفة فالممتنّ عليه بعهد الملك هو الجامع له ما يحتاج إليه من أداته فإذا أصاب ذلك لم يضرّه ما فاته من غير ذلك ولا ينبغي له أن يطلب سوى ذلك أو يأسف على شيء سوى ذلك أو يجهل أمره ومنزلته فيرى نفسه فقيراً مع ذلك ويرغب فيما عند الفقير ويشره نفسه إلى ما في أيديهم من الخسيس الطفيف الدني الحقير كيف يمثل إلى ذلك ونظر فيه والبلدان والأمصار من أهل الأرض من الملوك والأغنياء والفقراء في ضيافته وعياله طول أعمارهم لا يلبسون ألوان الثياب ولا يركبون ألوان المراكب ولا يطعمون ألوان المطاعم ولا يسكنون ألوان المساكن إلا به لأنه وتد من أوتاد الأرض وبه ينزل الغيث وبه يصرف العذاب لا عافية ولا سلامة ولا صحة ولا حياة إلا بدعائهم وبه ينصرون على العدوّ ولا أمن ولا ظفر ولا دعة إلا بالنصر على العدو فياله ملكاً ما أعظمه وأجلّه لم يبلغ ذلك بكثرة صلاة ولا صيام ولكن بسخاء النفس وسلامة الصدر والرحمة للمسلمين والنصيحة لهم سختْ أنفسهم لله عمّا سواه وسلمت صدورهم من الغلّ والغِشّ والحسد فطابت كالعسل الماذي من أذاقه حلوا وإن كان حلوا من المذاقة فهو حلو في نفسه طيب حيث ما كان واستنارت بالتعلق بالله فصار القلب كالمشكاة فيها مصباح المصباح في زجاجة الزجاجة كأنها كوكب دري يوقد من شجرة مباركة زيتونة لا شرقية ولا غربية يكاد زيتها يضيء و[لو] لم تمسسه نار نور على نور يخفي نوره في الأرض

Folio 12v

١٨ ويظهر في السماوات وامتلأت هذه القلوب رحمة للخلق وصفت بالرقة
وحوت بالنصيحة والشفقة و صارت كالأنهار العذبة الساقية للأشجار
٢٠ الحلوة والمرّة والحامضة والبشعة فحييت الأشجار وعاشت وصلحت و
تزينت وطابت فاخضرت وتبرهت لم تقتصر على سقي الطيب دون الخبيث
ولا الحلو دون الحامض والمر ضيقا وبخلا بل عمّتها كلها سعةً وجوداً وكرماً
رحموا أهل البلاد فرقّوا لهم ودعوا لهم ورأوا ضعفهم فأشفقوا عليهم
وعطفوا ونصحوا لهم ورقّوا لفقرهم الغضوض وأمراضهم المعطبة وقيودهم
٢٥ وأغلالهم المردية ومجالسهم الضنك الضيقة وجوعهم الهالك وعطشهم
المضعف وحرمانهم المتكدر وكانوا إخوانهم فوسعهم ورقة ولم يألوا
لهم مواساة ومعالجة بقدر طاقتهم واحتملوا أذاهم وغباهم من بين
أمراضهم وريحها وأقذارها وأنجاسها و[...] وهذيانهم وما كان
من ذهاب عقولهم فاحتملوها رحمة ورقة وشفقة ورحموا أهل العافية

Folio 13r

لضعفهم وعجزهم إن حيل بينهم وبين ذلك وخالطوهم بالنصيحة والشفقة
وكل ذلك من كرامة ربهم لهم ومنّة عليهم فكيف يصف الواصفون كرامته
وهوانه وإن استضرعوا أجهدهم هيهات هيهات تكلّ السنة الفصحاء
وتضل أوهام القلوب عن ذلك وإن الذي علق قلبه لا يستنكر أن يكون
هناك ذلك وأكثر من ذلك إن الدنيا كجونة الطبيب فيها الحيات
والسمايم القاتلة وفيها الدرياق والأدوية الشافية فالعبد الجاهل
إذا أدخل يده في الجونة لا يدري على ما تقع يده على الحية أو السم فيقتله
أو الدرياق والأدوية فيشفيه ولا ينبغي أن يجسر على ذلك دون أن
يجعل الطبيب ذريعة إلى ذلك ومعه يأخذ ويضع ويدخل يده بإذنه
وبأمره والعرض عليه والأخذ منه فكذلك الحكيم لا ينبغي أن يمدّ يده
إلى لقمة أو حوزة أو خوخة أو لبسة أو نظرة أو سكنة أو لفظة أو حركة
أو سكون إلا بأذن طبيبه وبه ومعه والعرض عليه والأخذ منه متواضعا
منتظراً مستأذنا مضطرا فإن السم يكفي منه القليل والقليل محذور منه
كالكثير والحية يكفي منها لدغة واحدة وكذلك في كل مشكل وواضح
عنده فإنه ربما كان الواضح عنده ترياق سماً عند الطبيب فيقتله وقد
روى ذلك كثيرا في العباد قد نزل بهم ذلك من قتيل قتله العلم وآخر
قتلته الصلاة وآخر قتله أعمال البر وكان سماً حسبه ترياقا وآخر

Folio 13r

قتله كلمة وآخر قتله نظرة وآخر قتله أكلة وآخر قتله شربة فيعتبر
ويعلم أنه مضطر إليه في جميع أحواله وهو كالأعمى وسط الحيات والعقارب
والحفر والعشوات يحتاج إلى قائد في كل خطوة يخطوها. فإن وإن سلم
في كثير من خطاه فربما كانت خطوة منه على رأس حية أو شفا جرف
أو شفير عشوة لم تغن عنه سلامته في الماضي فكذلك العبد مع ربه تبارك
اسمه وفيه للعبد منزلتان أدناهما خوف العبد على هلاك نفسه وتلفها
وهذا علم لا يجوز لأحد غير ذلك ولا يباح له إغفاله وأرفعهما وهو منزلة
الخاص خوف العبد في من سخط مولاه وأذاه وترك موافقته في شيء من الأشياء
فهذا الذي نزل منزلة الموافقة لأنه لا بدّ له من تقصد ذلك في منزلته على
موافقته والثاني لا بدّ له من ذلك في منزلته على نجاة نفسه فإن أصاب ذلك
صاحب الموافقة فهو إحكام أمره وفيه مصلحته وهو ركنه وسنده وآلته
وقوام أمره فإن رأيه في نفسه خلاف الموافقة كان وقوفه على ثلاثة مواضع

Folio 13v

أحدها أن يثبت لربه الربوبية على هذه الجهة من طريق المعرفة والثاني أن
يعرف نفسه باللوم والمذمّة ومخالفة مولاه والثالث أن يكون اشتغاله بالنظر
إليه لشيء ألقاه فيه فينظر إلى حكمه وصنعه ما يصنع به لا يرون طرفة عين مساغه
كالذي وقفه مولاه على جمرة فبصره طامح إليه مشتغل بالنظر إليه عمّا سواه وإلى
قدرته وحكمته واضطرار نفسه إليه وخليق أن يكون اشتغاله بذلك يشغله عمّا
يتعاطى نفسه من الخلاف حتى لا يجد نفسه مساغاً إلى أن يمضيه في استعمال الخلاف
فطريقه أن يسوغ له أو يحمله على التدبير فيه حتى مجّه حكمه الذي يريد به وفضله
وبيان عاقبته قد يجب عليه أن يقيم الربوبية لربّه والعبودية لنفسه في كل حركة
وسكون فلا يتحرك إلا عبدا ولا يسكن إلا عبدا ولا يرى محركا إلا ربه تعالى ولا
يرى مسكنا إلا ربه فالعارف منتظر تحريكه قبل تحركه لا إذنَ له في التحرك
بعد إرادته إياه عارف بتحريكه إياه بعد تحريكه بالقلب أو الجوارح منتظر
صنعه فهو منتظر في الابتداء قبل أن يبدو ومنتظر في الصنع بعد ما يبدو منه
هواجس القلب وحركاته ناسب إليه تهييج الحركات بعد أن هيّجها منتظر
تهييجها قبل هيّجها يا عبدي الضعيف قد وقفتك على جمر لأُريكَ قدرتي وربوبيتي
وجبروتي وعظمتي فإن فزعت إلى غيري لا نسفنّك عني وإن فزعت إلى
حيلة لا تغني الحيلة دوني ما فزعك إلى الحيلة وأنا واقفك والحيلة لا تنفذ
بغير أذني وليس لها سلطان دوني فإن شئت فجّرب الحيلة لا تزيدك

Folio 13v

إلا عبئا ومشقة إنما تغني الحيلة من لم أؤته من المعرفة ما أتيتك إذ أريه على
قدر ضعفه وقلة طاقته فأما أنت فقد منيت عليك بمعرفتي وأردت
منك حقيقتها ولا تقدر عليها إلا أني أقفك على جمرة وأريك حدائق ناضرة
أمامك تنظر إليها ولا تقدر على أن تتحرك من مكانك إليها حتى تذعن لي وتخضع
وتثبت على معرفتي ولا تضيعها في أوان الحاجة إليها كالعبد الحقير
بين يدي السيد الكبير والضعيف قدام القوي إذا سقط لا يشتغل
بالحيلة دون الاستعانة والمريض قدام الطبيب لا يعالج دون الاستعانة
به والأعمى قدام البصير لا يشتغل بالعصا دون الاستعانة بقيادته كيف وإن
رأى القوي أسقطه مع ذلك وكيف وإن رأى الطبيب أمرضه وكيف
وإن رأى البصير ضلله ثم يراه قادرا على هدايته والطبيب بصيرا بشفائه
والقوي قادرا على معونته ورفعته حكمي فيك نافذ وأمري فيك جائز
أقلّبك كيف أشاء فإن تواضعتَ رفعتُك ولا تملكه إلا بي وإن خشيت

Folio 14r

فوت طمعك فإني لا أخشى أن يفوتني شيء أريده وإن خفتَ الوقوع في محذور
لإسرافك عليه فإني لا أخاف أن يباددني شيء فألبسْ لباس الذلّ والتواضع
ولا تقدرْ له إلا ولا بطش يفوتني لحيلتك أو يستغني بقوتك أنا الذي
أدبّر الأمر وأفصّل الآيات مالك الملوك أوتي الملك من أشاء وأنزع الملك
ممن أشاء وأعزّ من أشاء وأذلّ من أشاء بيدي الخير إني على كل شيء قدير
ما أفتح للناس من رحمة فلا ممسك لها وما أمسك فلا مرسل من بعدي
وإن أمسسْ بضرّ فلا كاشف له إلا أنا وإن أردْ بخير فلا رادّ لفضلي
أصيب به من أشاء وأنا الغفور الرحيم إذا غامضك أمر فلتطمح ببصرك
فيه إلى الله دون كل شيء وليكن منك إلتفاتة سريعة إلى السماء مع استقبال
الأمر سواء لتكن هذه عادتك والمعين عليها ربك فإذا كلّفت الشروع في
العمل والقيام به فاجعل الاختيار إلى ربك دون اشتغالك باختيارك
وتدبيرك وتقديرك فإن كان غرضك مرض أو ألم ولم يشغلك به فأحسن
الظنّ به وإرضَ به فإنك لم ترد غير ذلك طمأنينة وسكوناً واختيارا لعقلك
وتدبيرك مع خطائك وجهلك وغلطك في جنب عظمته وعلمه النافذ الذي
لا يخطئ وتدبيره الذي لا يغلط وتقديره المحكم المبرم الذي لا ينقص
عن إحاطة العقول به واستدراك الأفهام إياه فإن هجس في نفسك
طريق الوسوسة أو الخوف إن قضاءه قضى عليك لعله عقوبة منه على

Folio 14r

إساءة منك ولعلّ غيره كان أوفق لك فجوابك لنفسك إن كان كذلك
فحاجتي إلى اعتناءه وإرضائه والتواضع له فيما استقبلني به وقضاه
على دون نزوعي إلى منزلة ودرجة لم أكن أنا أهلا لها وإغفال ما ارتكبت
من أذاه و معصيته فإن في ذلك خصالا مذمومة أوّلها استحقار
الإساءة والثاني تعاطي ما لست له بأهل من طريق التعظيم والثالث
ترك التواضع في رفع نفسك عن الدرجة السفلى إلى العليا فإذا
ذكرت عظمته وجلاله وطهارته لم ذكرت ثم ذكرت خرابك عليه وإغفالك أمره ينبغي
أن تأخذك الحمية على نفسك حتى لا تبالي ما صنع بها من المكروه والسوء
غيرة لخالقك وحمية وغضبا فيما ارتكبت نفسك فأنت أهل ذلك ولا يتنبّه
لهذا ولا يعين عليه إلا من بيده ملكوت كل شيء وإن إختارك الدخول في عمل
أو أمر فليكن دخولك كأن الملك ولّاك كوره أو مصرا أو كتب لك عهداً
فأنت واليُهُ وأميرُهُ تحتاج أن تعمل بما في العهد من جميع ما أمرك ونهاك

Folio 14v

وتحتاج أن تعدل في القضية وتقسم بالسوية وتعطف على الرعية
وليكن دخولك على أصل واحد وهو أساس أمرك أن يكون العز لله في
ذلك دون إحكام كل شيء وتقدير كل شيء وإن أهل الغفلة يدخلون لتقدير
شيء وإحكام أمر و النظر في شيء وإن كان ذلك أيضاً موجودا في أهل
العبادة وأما أهل المعرفة والحكماء فإن نظرهم إليه وإلى صنعه دون
كل مقدار وأدخل به ومعه وأعمل كل عمل صغير أو كبير به ومعه
وإن كان صوابا فإنه ربّما يرتكب الصواب من ليس له درجة المعرفة وحده
ويعمل وحده إذا بيّن له وجه الصواب جزاه عليه وغفله عن الاضطرار
إليه فيه فربما إصابته نكبة وربما أجرى له عمله مداراةً له على طاقته
ولا ينبغي لأهل المعرفة أن يعملوا شيئا من الأعمال دونه فإن فعلوا رأوه
ذنباً وغفلةً وتقصيراً مالوا وأنابوا وتابوا واستغفروا واستغاثوا
فما وضح لك فاعمل به ومعه وما أشكك عليك فانتظره وأعرض عنه واستفحص
من عنده واركب الأمر الهائل معه بجساره وعونه وقوته وضعف التهول
عنده وملكه إياه واحذر المأمن أن تدخل بأمن فإن هناك هول سلطانه
وعظمة شأنه إذا غفلك عنه يوشك أن يأخذك أما ترى ما صنع بمن فعل
هذا ويوم حنين إذ أعجبتكم كثرتكم فلم تغن عنكم شيئاً وضاقت عليكم الأرض
بما رحبت الآية قال ربّ بما أنعمت عليّ فلن أكون ظهيراً للمجرمين فأصبح في المدينة خائفاً

Folio 14v

١٨ يترقّب الآية[٦٦٨] قال فابتلاه وقد ما قالها رجل ألا ابتلي نظر إلى أمن الرحمة بدل النعمة

فابتلاه الله بالخوف بما أجرى على يده من قبل الرجل وقوله تعالى

٢٠ ولا تقولنّ لشيء إني فاعل ذلك غداً إلا أن يشاء الله واذكر ربك إذا

نسيت[٦٦٩] وقوله تعالى فلا يأمن مكر الله إلا القوم الخاسرون[٦٧٠] وقوله تعالى

ولولا أن ثبّتْناك لقد كِدت تركن إليهم شيئاً قليلا[٦٧١] ثم ارتكاب الهائل به ومعه

ورؤية ضعف كل هائل في عظمة سلطانة فإنه لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله والجسارة

عند ذلك به والتوكل عليه وإقامة الربوبية له وحقيقة المعرفة عنده الذين

٢٥ قال لهم الناس إن الناس قد جمعوا لكم فاخشوهم فزادهم إيمانا وقالوا

حسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل إلى قوله إن كنتم مؤمنين[٦٧٢] إذ هما في الغار إذ يقول

لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا فأنزل الله سكينته الآية[٦٧٣] وإما ينزغنّك

من الشيطان نزغ فاستغذ بالله الآية[٦٧٤] فإذا أقرأت القرآن فاستعذ بالله

من الشيطان الآية[٦٧٥] إن ينصركم الله فلا غالب لكم[٦٧٦] إلى قوله فليتوكّل المتوكلون[٦٧٧]

668 Qurʾān: 28:17.
669 Qurʾān: 18:23.
670 Qurʾān: 7:99.
671 Qurʾān: 17:74.
672 Qurʾān: 3:173–175.
673 Qurʾān: 9:40.
674 Qurʾān: 7:200.
675 Qurʾān: 16:98.
676 Qurʾān: 3:160.
677 This verse ends in *al-muʾminūn* (the believers) and not *al-mutawakkilūn* (those who are reliant).

Folio 15r

يجعل فيه ما يعطي ويتصدّق عليه ولا يعين نفسه به ولا يرضى لنفسه
منزلته فيباشر الضياع يتعاهدها ويطوف بها في أوان شربها ويعتزل
عنها في أوان اعتزالها يدري متى يباشر ومتى ينعزل وكيف وهذا
الولي الملك يخالط بذلك ما خالط بالحلم والاحتمال والنصيحة والرحمة
والشفقة فهو مباشر ضياعه وجميع إنزاله في أوان ذلك ويعتزل
ليكفّ ظلمه وجوره وعداوته وأذاه إذا ما خاف على نفسه فله الإنصاف
لأن المجالسة مع كلّ مباح إذا كانت مع الإنصاف وإذا خاف أن
لا يؤدي لله أمانة أو تجيء منه خيانة في ذلك أو ترك عدل في شيء من
الأشياء هرب من أذاء سيده وارتكاب ما لا يرضى إعظاما له على ذلك
وهو أن اعتزاله وجلوسه عن الضيعة ليس لمن يخالط بها وعظمة وتعزّزا
وغفلة وجورا ويعتزل كبرا وإعجابا واستصغارا لغيره ونظرا إلى
مساوئه وتطاولاً عليه وارتفاع نفس عن أن يكون يصلح له جليساً و
أنيساً وأنّى له ذلك وهو ينظر إلى مساوئه و معاتبه وجوره ولومه
وكفرانه وزلته وغفلته ومعصيته واستصغاره لأمر مولاه وإيثاره عليه
مع نجاسته وأقذاره كيف يطمئنّ إلى أن يرى مولاه يصلح أن يكون له جليساً
وأنيساً ومؤدباً ورابضاً ومعينا ويرغب في ذلك إليه ويسأل إياه
مع ما يرى من أنجاسه وأقذاره مع طهارة مولاه وقدسه وارتفاعه وعظمته

Folio 15r

١٨ وملكه وجبروته وسلطانه ولا يرى نفسه يصلح أن يكون جليسا أو أنيسا و
مؤدبا ورابضا ومعينا لآدمي مثله ويرفع نفسه عن ذلك إن الحكيم
٢٠ إذا نبّه ربه تبارك اسمه لذلك يستحيي من ربه تعالى أن ينزل هذه المنزلة
ولكن يكون اعتزاله معرفة بضعف نفسه وكثرة جوره وأذاه فيكف جوره
وشره وأذاه وذلك منّ من مولاه عليه كيف يشكر الطاهر لو لم ير نجاسة
النجس وكيف يخاف النجاسة لولا النجاسة وكيف يفزع ويضرع إلى مولاه
من نتن المنتن لولا المنتن وكيف يشكر على طيب الرائحة لولا الريح المنتنة
٢٥ فسبحان من جعل الطيب صلاحا للطيب وجعل الطيب محتاجا إلى
المنتن وجعل النجس صلاحا للطاهر وجعل الطاهر محتاجاً إلى النجس
كما جعل الروث النجس صلاحا للكرم الطاهر وكما جعل الكرم الطيب
محتاجا إلى الروث النجس ألم تر إلى جسد الإنسان كيف دبّر بحكمته
الحكيمة مصالحه ومرافقه بالضياء والظلمة والطيب والنتن وأنواع

Folio 15v

الأضداد كيف دبّر بربوبيته مصباحين مضيئين صافيين منيرين ركبهما في رأسه ثم ركب من ورائهما ثقبين مظلمين جعل فيها أقذارا ومرارات وبهما انتفع الإنسان في أوان حاجته إليهما ولم ينتفع حينئذ بالمصباحين الصافيين فكيف لم يكن هذا الثقب المظلم المرّ القذر مذموماً

منفر في مقدار جهل الجاهل أم كيف لم يكن على هيئة المصباح لو كان كذلك لزاملته المنفعة لا يدركها إلا به والمصلحة التي لا سبيل إليها إلا من طريقه ثم كيف دبّر بحكمته في أسفله ثقبا يخرج منه النتن والقذر ويتلطخ به ويلزمه مؤنة التطهّر منه ومقاساة ما يصل إليه من مكروهه عند إلقائه كيف لم يطلب الجاهل مسدا لهذا الثقب فرارا من مكروهه بل لو سدّ عليه في بعض الأوقات بذل جميع ما يملك من الدنيا وإن ملكها بحذافيرها ليفتح له موضع نتنه وقذره لما يرى من العطب في سدّها والفرح والراحة في فتحها فإن مدبّر ذلك هو الذي دبّرها وقدّرها لك من الأضداد والأشياء المختلفة بهذه الحكمة وبهذه الشفقة وبهذا اللطف وبهذا النظر وتدبير جسده دليل على ما سواه لو نظر فيه وفرّغ ذهنه ثم يسقم جسده فينزل المرض بطائفة من جسده والعافية بطائفة منه فيكون العضو المعافى للحكيم شكرا ورؤية منّةٍ ولطفٍ وعبرا و تربية ويكون العضو

Folio 15v

١٨ السقيم صبرا ورضى وموافقة ودواء. فهذه دواؤه في مرارته وكراهته
وذلك عداءه في لطافته وحلاوته وعذوبته فهو بين العداء والدواء
٢٠ لا يوجد نفع ذلك في ذي ولا نفع ذي في ذلك جعل المحبوب له مصلحة
والمكروه مصلحة والحلوة نفعا والمرارة نفعاً دبّر له مصالحه بالليل
والنهار والظلمة والضياء والصيف والشتاء والحرّ والبرد واليابس
والرطب كما قال الله تبارك اسمه في التوراة إني ركبت جسد آدم حين
خلقته من رطب ويابس وسخن وبارد ثم خلقته في الجسد أربعة
٢٥ أقوام من الخلق هنّ هلاك الجسد وقوامه باذني لا يقوم الجسد إلا بهنّ
ولا تقوم واحدة منهن إلا بالأخرى منهن المرّة السوداء والمرة الصفراء
والدم والبلغم أسكنت بعض هذا الخلق في بعض فجعل مسكن اليبوسة
في المرة السوداء ومسكن الرطوبة في الدم ومسكن الحرارة في المرة الصفراء
ومسكن البرودة في البلغم فأي جسد اعتدلت فيه هذه الفطر

Folio 16r

الأربع التي خلقتها وجعلتها ملاكه وقوامه فكانت كلّ واحدة منهن
ربعاً لا تزيد ولا تنقص كملت صحته فاعتدلت بنيانه وإن ازدادت واحدة
منهن عليهن قهرتهن ومالت بهن ودخلت السقم من ناحيتها بقدر
ما زادت وأيتهنّ كانت ناقصة تقلّ عنهنّ وأدخلن عليها السقم من ناحيتهنّ
بقدر قلتها عنهن حتى تضعف عن طاقتها وتعجز عن مقاربتهن وهو الزائد الناقص
المتمّ المستخرج من التمام مصلحة ليست في النقصان والزيادة بتدبيره
ولطفه والمستخرج من الزياده والنقصان ليست في التمام بتدبيره
ولطفه وحكمته الحكيمة فالبلغم يهيج من رطوبة الدم وحلاوته ولولا
استقباله الدم لأهلك الدم الجسد والمرّة الصفراء تهيج من شدّة البلغم
إذا أبلغ غايته ولولا استقبالها إياه لأهلك الجسد والريح تهيج من يبوسة
المرّة السوداء وحرارتها ولولا استقبال برودة الريح إياها لأهلكت
شدّة حرارتها الجسد والدم يهيج من اضطراب الريح ومهبّها ومجرها
في العروق فلولا استقبال الدم إياها لأهلكت الجسد وكل واحدة منهنّ
مزاج لصاحبه وقوام له بإذنه قال وخلق أربعاً من الرياح في
جوف الإنسان وكّلها به فمنها ريح وكّلها لابتلاع الطعام والشراب لا يبلع
الإنسان شيئاً إلا بها سلطانها في أذن الإنسان ومنزلتها الصدر مع
البلغم وريح وكلها لحفظ الطعام والشراب في المعدة ومنزلتها في

Folio 16r

١٨ الطحال مع المرّة وريح وكّلها لأيقاد نار المعدة وطبخ الطعام والشراب
وقسمتها في جميع الجسد في العروق ومنزلتها في الكبد مع المرة وريح
٢٠ وكّلها لتحريك الطعام والشراب من الأعفاج والأمعاء وإخراجها من الإنسان
ومنزلتها في الكليتين وكل شيء يذوقه الإنسان يقع على الكبد ثم يرتفع
إلى الدماغ فيأخذ الدماغ منه حاجته ثم يدفعه إلى القلب فيأخذ
منه حاجته ثم يصير إلى الطحال ثم يتفرق في سائر الجسد وإنما يهتدي
بالكبد لأن جميع عروق الجسد أصلها في الكبد وهي ثلاثمئة وستين عرقا
٢٥ والجسد أسس على منازل الملك فملك الجسد القلب وعماله العروق
في الأوصال فأرضه الجسد وحراسه معدته وحجابه صدره وأعوانه
يداه فاليدان يقربان ويبعدان بحسب ما يوحي الملك إليهما والرجلان
ينقلان الملك حيث شاء وهما كالدابّة للملك والعينان مصباح له
بهما يبصر كل شيء والأذنان بابان له لأنه في حجاب ومنهما يدخل عليه

Folio 16v

ولا يدخل عليه إلا من يأذن له الملك فإذا دخل أطرق منصتا حتى يعى
على الداخل ثم يجيب بقدر ما يريد واللسان ترجمان له فهو يوحي إلى
الدماغ ما يريد والدماغ إلى اللسان واللسان يترجم ويفصح وكذلك
الصوت إذا أدخل في الأذن أدته الأذن إلى الدماغ والدماغ إلى القلب
فهو أقرب الحُجَّاب إليه واللسان لا يترجم إلا بأداة كثيرة بريح الهواء
وبخار المعدة وعون الشفتين وليس للشفتين قوة إلا بإسناد اللسان
لا يستغني بعضها عن بعض والكلام لا يحسن إلا بترجيعه في الأنف لأن الأنف
يزين الكلام كما يزين النافخ في المزمار والأنف يؤدّي إلى الدماغ
بالريح والدماغ إلى القلب فإذا دخل على الملك ما لا يوافقه عاقب
الحجاب واختلط وإذا دخل عليه ما يحب أثاب الحجاب وعقوبته
الحزن ومنه يكون الأمراض والعلل وثوابه الفرح ومنه يكون الغذاء والصحة
بإذن بارئه وهو أعلم بما دبّر وأراد وقدّر وأحكم والعينان شحمتان
جعل ماؤهما مالحاً لأن المعدة قِدر الطعام والشراب والكبد نار موكلة
بإنضاج ما يدخل في المعدة فيرتفع بخار حرارتها إلى الرأس
فلولا أنه جعل ماء العين مالحا لذابتا وفسدتا وانتنتا قال وأنبتَ
الأشفار والحاجب لينشف شعرها ماء العين لأن هذا الماء يسخن
بحرارة المعدة فإذا نشفته الحرارة والأشفار بردت المقلة وصحّت

Folio 16v

فإن صلاحها في برودتها وملوحتها ولهذا قالوا أقرّ الله عينك وتفسيرها
برّد الله عينك فيما فسّروا القرّ بالبرد في كلام العرب وإنما دعوا بهذا
لأن صلاحها في القرّ. وتصديق ذلك أنهم قالوا هو قرّة عين وهو سخنة
عين لمن لا يوافق العين لأن فسادها في سخونتها فيتقي سخونتها بالحواجب
والأهداب وذوبها ونتنها بالملوحة والقر وإنما جعل المرارة في الأذنين
كيلا تدخله الدواب فتهجم على دماغه. فليس دابّة تدخلها إلا ماتت قبل
أن تصل إلى الدماغ قال وإنما جعل العذوبة في الشفتين واللهاة
لتجد طعم الشراب والطعام قال قائل فكيف خلق في العين سوادا
والعين مصباح والبياض أقرب إلى الضياء من السواد قال إن النور
إنما يضيء أبدا في السواد أما ترى السراج إذا كان في الظلمة فإذا برز
إلى الضوء ذهب نوره أما ترى القمر والنجوم إذا أقبلت ظلمة الليل
أضاءت فإذا جاء ضوء النهار ذهب نورهن قال وأسكن العقل
في الدماغ ولذلك صار أقرب إلى القلب من كل شيء قال والطحال

Folio 17r

والطحال ضد الكبد والكبد نار مشعلة والطحال مثل الجرّة المملوءة
ماء باردا وهي قُبالة الكبد من الشق الأيسر. ولولا برودته واستقباله
الكبد لأحرقت الكبد الجسد بنارها قال فحين خلق الله تعالى آدم
صلوات الله جعل في جسده تسعة أبواب سبعة في رأسه واثنين
في جسده ثم وضعه أربعين عاماً قبل أن ينفخ فيه الروح تنظر إليه
الملائكة حتى عاد صلصالا كالفخار فإذا وقعت النطفة في الرحم
صارت في الجسد أربعين يوما ثم تكون علقة أربعين يوما ثم تكون
مضغة أربعين يوما ثم تكون مخلّقة في الشهر الخامس وينفخ فيه الروح
لعشر يمضين وهو قوله تعالى يتربّصن بأنفسهن أربعة أشهر وعشراً[٦٧٨]
فإذا أبلغ ستة أشهر سلط الله ريحا من بين يدي أمّه على رحمها فمن
هناك بدأ طعامه وشرابه فإذا بلغ المولود في بطن أمّه ستة أشهر
أخذ في نقصان رزقه فإذا بدا منكسا من فرج أمه أخذ في نقصان
أجله قال إن الحكيم روحه في الملكوت ومرتعه هناك لا يكاد
ينزل في أسراب المزبلة أو يرتع في عشواتها جسدا كان أو غيره فهو كالماء
الطاهر العذب في الجوّ فهو طاهر مطهر الأنجاس فإذا وقع في هذة المزبلة
صار نجسا منجسا مثل الماء تدخل في البطن فلا بدّ أن تقذر وتنجس

[678] Qurʾān: 2:234.

Folio 17r

١٧ ساعة ما تدخل البطن وتخالط القذرة والأقذار فبعد ذلك ينجس
ولا يطهر ولا يطهّر منه فليتق الحكيم إن يرى مرتع روحه دون الملكوت
وليكن في ذلك مفزعه إلى بارئه ومالكه وضرورته إليه فإذا بيّن للحكيم
٢٠ حقارة نفسه وصغر قدرها وعيوبها ولومها وكفرانها وأنجاسها وأقذارها
وفتح له طريق معرفة القدّوس الظاهر العلي العظيم فلا يقدر أن يتمنّى المنازل
الطاهرة أو يسأل ذلك أو يزاوله استحياء من الله تعالى وإجلالا
عن أن يكون هو يصلح مع أقذاره أن ينال منه هذه المنزلة أو يكون أهلا لها
و لا يرضى أيضا أن يؤذي ربه ويخالف مرضاته فيتحيّر فيؤيّده القادر
٢٥ إن شاء بتسهيل طريق له أو طرف بين الطريقين فيكون مزاولته ذلك
على طريقة معرفة خالقه إنه أهل أن يقدّس ويتجلّ ويعبد هذه العبادة
ويعرف له هذه وإن لم أكن أنا أهل لهذه المنزلة فتردّدي في ذلك
التماساً منّي لمعرفة ما هو أهله لا التماساً لشيء أنا أهله فإن استعملني فيما دون
ذلك من التخليط والتلطيخ فإني لا أستوجب إلا ذلك ولا يبلغ قدري فوق

Folio 17v

ذلك وأنزّهه عن أن يكون يستوجب مثل هذه العبودية من عبيده وإن
استعملني فوق ذلك من الطهارة فهو أهل ذلك ولا يستوجب إلا الطاهر
وليس هو أهل إلا للطاهر لأنه طاهر وأبعد نفسي عن أن يستوجب مثقال
حبة من خردل من ذلك إن الحكيم إذا نظر إلى المبتلي بالغيب يعدله
بنظرة إلى قدرة الله عز وجل التي بها ابتلاه وعظمته وجبروته كيف قهّر
العباد بها وكيف ابتلاهم وكيف حوّلهم وكيف قلّبهم وشتّتهم وصنّفهم
حتى يمتلئ قلبه من هيبة عظمته وجلالة فيورثه ذلك خوفاً منه وجلالاً
وإشفاقاً على نفسه وضرعة إليه وتواضعاً ثم يرجع بذلك النظر إلى المبتلي
وضعفه وقلّة حيلته وما حلّ به من هوان ربّه وخذلانه وحيلولته
بينه وبين كرامته وألطافه ورحمته ويمتلئ قلبه له برأفة ورحمة ورقة
ويرثي له ويدعو ثم يرجع بذلك النظر إلى ما اصطنع الله عنده من
العافية والسلامة وألوان الكرامة والفضيلة على غيره التي لم يكن له فيها
مثقال حبة من خردل من القوة ولم يستوجبها شيء كان منه ولم
يستأهلها فحمد ربه على ذلك ويمتلئ قلبه من الشكر له والتعلق به
والسكون إليه ثم يرجع بذلك النظر إلى خوف التحويل من منزله إلى
منزلة المبتلي أو دونه فإن مكره غير مأمون ثم يرجع إلى أصل
نظرتهما فيقول لا أدري لعله كتب في الأصل سعيدا وكتبتُ شقيا

Folio 17v

١٨ ولعله يحول إلى أرفع المنازل وأحول إلى أدنى المنازل فيرجو له

ويخاف على نفسه فهي أربع منازل يترقّاها منزلة منزلة التعظيم

٢٠ لربه والهيبة له و الرحمة للمبتلي والشكر على المنّة والخوف لمكره

فتحلّ درجات العدل ومراتب الانصراف ومن اجتذبت قلبه الملامة[٦٧٩]

بالقلب أو الجسد دون هذه الدرجات فقد خاطر بنفسه وأشرف

على الظلم والجور والقساوة وكفران النعمة والأمن من المكر والعقوبة

فصار إلى أكثر من منزلة المبتلي وأسفل منه إن لم يتداركه ربه

٢٥ برحمته قال احذر الحكاية والمحادثة أشد الحذر واستعن

بالله أعني بذلك الحكاية عن نفسك فإن فيها آفاتا واختلاطا كثيرا

وأخطارا ومؤنات وندامات فما العاصم إلا الله وإفساد الحكمة

ونقص العقل وذلك مثل الملك الذي له أنواع الخزائن من الذهب

والفضة والجوهر والثياب والمطبخ وغير ذلك مما في داره من

[679] This could demonstrate a criticism of the approach of the Malāmatiyya since he uses the word for blame (*malāma*) here to criticize those who focus on reproaching their body and their soul rather than focusing on God himself.

Folio 18r

قطره وهذا مخالف لمقدار الناس ثم ربما أرسل من المطر وبلاً وسخاً وسيلاً
وسكباً حتى يملّه الناس ويهدم البيوت ويوحل الطريق ويبل ويتلطخون
ويشقّ عليهم طورا لو رأوا مستعملاً غيره لذمّوا فعله لأنه ليس على مقدارهم ثم يكون
وقت ذلك في الوقت الذي لا يرون وقته ولا يكون في الوقت الذي يرون
وقته وكذلك الريح ربما لانت وربما اشتدت وعصفت كالمعتلم أو المجنون
أو الشيء الطائش في مقدار الناس على هذه الأشياء فهذا الولي الخادم العارف
آثر البلادة مرة والطيش مرة والبخل مرة والسخاء أخرى والمنفعة مرة
والمضرة أخرى لا يوافق مقدارهم وكذلك الشمس في طلوعها وغروبها ومضرتها
مرة لقوم ومنفعتها مرة لقوم وسرعة وحينها إذا حان غروبها واحتباسها
حتى لا تجيء حين طلوعها واحتجابها بالسحاب مرة وبروزها منه أخرى وكذلك
في إخراجها يمرها مرة وورقها ونزهها وخضرتها في وقت ربيعها وصيفها
وتجرّدها وامتناعها عن ذلك كله مرة في وقت نسيانها فكذلك استعمالها
السيد الكبير وفعله ولو فعل ذلك غيره لضجر الناس ولاموه مع أنهم
يضجرون من فعله إن لم يقدروا على لومه فإذا كان استعماله للإنسان
فإنما يكون سعيه على ثوابت استعماله في منفعته مرة لقوم ومضرته لأخرى
ولقوم دون قوم وسرعته مرة وبطؤها أخرى وسخائه مرة وبخله أخرى
وخفته مرة وأناته أخرى إلا أن الخلق لا يرون استعماله فينسبون اللوم إليه

Folio 18r

١٨ وإن كان فيهم فالملك المتوّج والعزيز القاهر والحر المكد والغني المثري
والجبار المتسلط والكريم المتعطف طوبى لهم وحسن مآب إياك ثم
٢٠ إياك وإياك وشيئا من استعمال الدنيا والخلق من قبل المكاسب والصناعات
والمخالطة دون الفراغ من جميع الشغل والتفرد لعناية الإيمان أن تخلص
إلى سويداء القلب وما هو من أسبابه فقد عرفت الحجب من الشكر
وبالله فاستعن ولا تقر إلى شيء ما لم يظهر صدق ذلك فالزمان زمان
غرور واستدراج وظلمة ولبس إلا من عصم الله برحمته وفضله وأعده
٢٥ كل شيء سوى ذلك كعبادة الصنم وإن كان في الأمور العظام من الفضائل
وبسببه الوجوب فإن حاجتك إلى مباشرة اليقين بالم... والرب وصفاته
على حقائقه وصدقه فالله المعين ولا ترض لنفسك عمل العباد مع نور
اليقين والتصديق وذلك إنما ينصر بفضل الله من كان منه فارغا من الشغل
ثم أخذ النظر جيدا جدا في تصديق ما أقربه بقلبه عند ... والثوابت

Folio 18v

والحقائق فيما هو أصغر من خردلة وأخفّ من ذرّة وأدقّ من رأس
إبرة من خطرات قلبه وإقراره بأن الله تعالى عالم بجميع ذلك وقادر
على جميع أموره وأرحم به من نفسه وما ذكر له ووصف من أمر معاده
شيئا شيئا فهناك يستبين له الشك من اليقين إن شاء الله تعالى
وقد نجز الكتاب بعون الملك الوهاب
كتبه لأجل مخدومه ومولاه عماد الحق والملة والدين
لا زال مرتقيا إلى أعالي منازل الصديقين
ومرتغبا في أزهار أنوار مشاهدات المقربين
خاجمن محمود بن محمد الشيخاني ملتمسا من
عالي جنابه أن يستغفر له ويترحم
عليه بعض [...] وصلى
الله على محمد وآله
أجمعين

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